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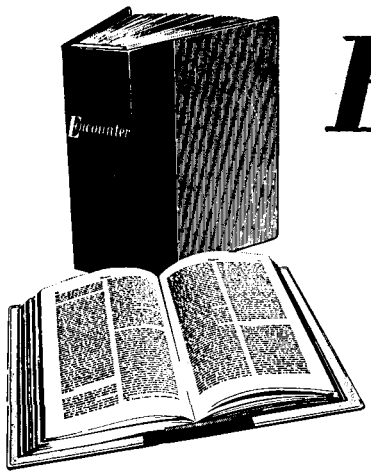

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Encounter

APRIL 1979
VOL. LII NO. 4

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* ANTHONY THWAITE
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PUBLISHING ADVISERS: *Lord Ardwick, Blouke Carus, Lord Cudlipp, Cecil Harmsworth King, Leon Levy, Jack Watmough*
Per copy: UK £1.00: USA & Canada $2.00. Back numbers £1.50 ($3.00). Postage extra: 15p (25c)
Annual Subscriptions: UK & Europe £10.50: USA & Canada $21.00 surface, $26.00 by air: Elsewhere £12.00.
Binder for six copies: £2.50 ($5.00).
Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc., P.O. Box 1425, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. ©*1979 by Encounter Ltd.*
Manuscripts are returned only if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp or International Reply Coupons).

NO NONSENSE 3 *Stanislaw Lem*

WHAT AILS US AND WHY: 8 *I. Robert Sinai*
ON THE ROOTS OF DISASTER & DECAY

MEMORIES OF EINSTEIN 18 *Esther Salaman*

COLUMN 26 *R*

MEN & IDEAS

KEYNES & THE RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBERALISM 29 *Robert Skidelsky*

POEMS

Brian Lee 24, *Peter Redgrove* 25

NOTES & TOPICS

BRITAIN & EUROPE 41 *Lord Gladwyn*

INTO A DANGEROUS DECADE 44 *Alun Chalfont*

SPECIAL BOOK SECTION: HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

FROM PARTISANS TO PARTICIPANTS 50 *Gordon Leff*

PRINT CULTURE 59 *Frances Yates*

THE PAST PRESERVED 64 *Geoffrey Dimbleby*

MORAL AMUSEMENTS 70 *Asa Briggs*

PIECING TOGETHER THE PRESENT 77 *David Miles*

POINTS OF THE COMPASS

EAST BERLIN REVISITED 85 *William Treharne Jones*

INTERVIEW

DISSIDENT REFLECTIONS 91 *Andrei Sinyavsky*

BOXES

The Signs of the Times (Peregrine Worsthorne) 12, *Intimidation (Die Welt)* 87

LETTERS 94

AUTHORS 97

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(March)

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(March, April, July, September)

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(March)

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(April)

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(August)

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(September)

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(September)

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Stanislaw Lem

No Nonsense

NOTHING, OR THE CONSEQUENCE is not only Mme Solange Marriot's first book;[1] it is also the first novel ever to have reached the limit of what writing can do. Not that it is a masterpiece of art; if I had to call it anything, I would call it a masterpiece of decency. The need for decency is the thorn in the side of all our literature today. Because our literature's main malaise is the disgrace that one cannot be a writer and at the same time a man who is completely, that is, in full seriousness, decent. The initiation into the true essence of literature brings about a malaise quite similar to that which afflicts a sensitive child when it is for the first time informed of the facts of life. The child's shock is a form of internal rebellion against the genital biology of our bodies, which seems to call for condemnation from the standpoint of good taste, and the shame and shock of the writer come from the realisation of the inevitable lie that one commits in writing. There exist necessary lies, e.g., those that are morally defensible (thus the doctor lies to his terminally ill patient), but literary lies do not belong in this category. Someone has to be a doctor, consequently someone has to lie as a doctor, but no necessity brings the pen into proximity with the clean page. The past knew not this embarrassment, for it was not free; literature in an age of faith does not lie, it only serves. Its emancipation from what was necessary service gave rise to a crisis whose manifestations today are often pitiful, if not outright obscene.

Pitiful, because a novel that depicts its own origination is half confession and half humbug. It, too, contains a residue, and even a good amount, of the lie. Sensing this, the next literati wrote gradually more and more about *how* one writes, to the detriment of the thing written, the story, and this method followed a falling curve down to works, finally, that were manifestos of epic impotence. And so the novel invited us to step into its dressing room. But such invitations must always be suspect—if they do not actually amount to propositioning, then they turn out to be coquetry, and to flirt instead of lie—it is like going from the frying pan to the fire.

The anti-novel strove to become more radical; that is, it made every effort to demonstrate that it was no illusion of anything. While the "self-novel" was like a magician who reveals to the public all that he is holding up his sleeve, the anti-novel was to become a pretence of nothing, not even of the self-unmasking magician. What then? It promised to communicate nothing, to tell of nothing, to signify not a thing, but merely *to be*, as a cloud is, a table, a tree. Fine in theory. It failed, however, because not everyone can be Lord God *tout court*, a creator of autonomous worlds, and a writer most certainly cannot. What decides the defeat is the issue of contexts: on them—on that which is completely *inexpressible*—depends the sense of what we say. The world of the Lord God has no contexts, hence it can be successfully replaced only by a world that is equally self-sufficient. You may stand on your head if you like, but it will never work—not in language.

What then was left to literature after the fatal knowledge of its own indecency? The self-novel is a partial striptease; the anti-novel, *ipso facto*, is (alas) a form of autocastration. Like the Skoptsi who, outraged in their moral conscience by their own genitality, performed upon themselves horrid operations, the anti-novel has mutilated the unfortunate body of traditional literature. What then was left? Nothing except a romance with nothingness.

[1] *Rien du tout, ou la conséquence*. By SOLANGE MARRIOT. Editions du Midi (Paris).

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For he who lies (and, as we know, a writer must lie) about *nothing* surely ceases to be a liar.

It was necessary, then—and herein is the consequence—to write *nothing*. But can such a task make sense? To write *nothing*—is it not the same as to write nothing? What then? . . .

Roland Barthes, the author of the now not-so-new essay "Le Degré zéro de l'écriture", had not an inkling of this (but for all its famous wit, his is a shallow intellect). He did not comprehend that literature always is parasitic on the mind of the reader. Love, a tree, a park, a sigh, an ear-ache—the reader understands, because the reader has experienced it. It is possible, of course, with a book to rearrange the furniture inside a reader's head, but only to the extent that there is some furniture there already, before the reading.

He is no parasite on anything, whose work is real: a mechanic, a doctor, a builder, a tailor, a dishwasher. What, in comparison, does a writer produce? Semblances. This is a serious occupation? The anti-novel wished to pattern itself after mathematics; mathematics, surely, yields nothing real! Yes, but mathematics does not lie, for it does only what it must. It operates under the constraint of necessities that it does not invent on the spur of the moment; the method is given to it, which is why the discoveries of mathematicians are genuine, and why, too, their horror is genuine when the method leads them to a contradiction. The writer, because he does not operate under such necessity, because he is so free, can only enter into his quiet negotiations with the reader; he urges the reader kindly to assume . . . to believe . . . to accept as good coin . . . but this is a game, and not the blessed bondage in which mathematics thrives. Total freedom is total paralysis in literature.

OF WHAT ARE WE SPEAKING? Of Mme Solange's novel. Let us begin with the observation that this pretty name may be read variously, depending on the context in which it is placed. In French it can be Sun and Angel (*Sol, Ange*). In German it will be merely the name of an interval of time (*so lange*—so long). The absolute autonomy of language is arrant nonsense; humanists have believed in it out of naïvety—to which naïvety, however, the cybernetics people had no right. Machines to translate faithfully, indeed! No word, no whole sentence has meaning in itself, within its own trench and boundary. Borges came close to this state of affairs when, in his story "Pierre Menard, the Author of *Don Quixote*", he described a literary fanatic, the eccentric Menard, who after a great number of intellectual preparations wrote *Don Quixote a second time*, word for word, not copying down Cervantes but—as it were—immersing himself totally in the latter's creative milieu. But the place in which Borges's short story touches on the secret is this following passage:

> "A comparison of the pages of Menard and Cervantes is highly revealing. The latter, for example, wrote (*Don Quixote*, Part One, Chapter XIX): '. . . truth, whose mother is history, who is the rival of time, the repository of deeds, the witness of the past, the pattern and the caution for the present day, and the lesson for future ages.'
>
> "This catalogue, published in the seventeenth century, penned by the 'layman genius' Cervantes, is simply a rhetorical encomium to history. Menard, on the other hand, writes: '. . . truth, whose mother is history, who is the rival of time, the repository of deeds, the witness of the past, the pattern and the caution for the present day, and the lesson for future ages.'
>
> "History as the mother of truth; the idea is extraordinary. Menard, a contemporary of William James, does not characterise history as the study of reality but as its source. Historical truth, for him, is not that which has taken place; it is that which we believe has taken place. The concluding phrases—the pattern and the caution for the present day, the lesson for future ages—are unabashedly pragmatic."

This is something more than a literary joke and poking fun; it is the pure and simple truth, which the absurdity of the idea itself (to write *Don Quixote a second time*!) in no way lessens. For in fact what fills every sentence with meanings is the context of the given period; that which was "innocent rhetoric" in the 17th century is, in our age, truly cynical in its meanings. Sentences mean nothing *in themselves*; it was not Borges who jokingly decided thus; the moment in history shapes the meanings of language, such is the inalterable reality.

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And now, literature. Whatsoever it relates to us must prove a lie, not being the literal truth. Balzac's Vautrin is as non-existent as Faust's devil. When it speaks the honest truth, literature ceases to be itself and becomes a diary, a news item, a denunciation, an appointment book, a letter, whatever you like, only not artistic writing.

AT THIS JUNCTURE appears Mme Solange with her *Rien du tout, ou la conséquence*. The title? Nothing, or the consequence? The consequence of what? Literature, obviously; for literature to be decent, that is, not to lie, is the same as for literature not to be. *Only* of this is it still possible today to write a *decent* book. The blush of indecency no longer works; it was good yesterday, but now we recognise it for what it is: a common pose, the trick of the experienced stripper who knows that her feigned modesty, her lowered lashes, her fake schoolgirl embarrassment as she removes her panties, excites the house even more!

And so the theme has been defined. But how is one to write about nothing? It is necessary, yet impossible. By saying "nothing"? By repeating the word a thousand times? Or by beginning with the words "He was not born, consequently he was not named, either; on account of this he neither cheated in school nor later got mixed up in politics"? Such a work could have arisen, but it would have been a stunt and not a work of art, rather like those numerous books written in the second person singular; any of them can easily be booted out of such "originality" and forced to return to its proper place. All one need do is turn the second person back into the first. It does no violence whatever to the book; in no way does it change it. Similarly with our fictitious example: remove the negations, all those wearisome nots and nors that like a pseudo-nihilistic smallpox have bespotted the text, the text we invented extempore, and it becomes evident that here is yet another story, one of many, about the Marquise who left the house at five. To say she *didn't* leave—some revelation!

Mme Solange was not taken in by this sort of trick. For she understood (she must have understood!) that one may indeed describe a particular story (a love story, say) with non-events no worse than with events, but that the first device is merely an artifice. Instead of a print we obtain an exact negative, that is all. The nature of an innovation must be ontological, and not simply grammatical!

When we say, "He was not named because he was not born", we are, to be sure, moving beyond being, but only in that thinnest membrane of non-existence that adheres tightly to reality. He was not born, although he could have been born, did not cheat, although he could have cheated. He could have done everything, had he been. The work will stand entirely on that "could have." Out of such flour one cannot bake bread. One cannot go bounding from being to unbeing using such ploys. It is necessary, therefore, to leave the membrane of primitive denials, or of the negatives of actions, in order to plunge into nothingness, plunge deeply, hurling oneself headlong into it, but of course not blindly; to *enminus* non-being more and more powerfully—which must be a considerable labour, a great effort; and here is salvation for art, because what is involved is a full expedition into the abyss of ever more precise and even greater Nothing, and therefore a *process*, whose dramatic peripeteia, whose struggle may be depicted—so long as it succeeds!

The first sentence of *Rien du tout, ou la conséquence* reads, "The train did not arrive"; in the next sentence we find "He did not come." We meet, then, with negations, but of what exactly? From the standpoint of logic these are total negations, since the text affirms absolutely nothing existentially; indeed, it confines itself exclusively to what did *not* occur.

THE READER, however, is a creature more frail than a perfect logician. So, although the text says nothing of this, there is conjured up involuntarily in his imagination a scene taking place at some railway station, a scene of waiting for someone who has not arrived, and since he knows the sex of the author (authoress), the waiting for the non-arrival immediately carries the anticipation of an erotic encounter. What of this? Everything! Because the whole responsibility for these conjectures, from the very first words, falls on the reader. With not a single word does the novel confirm his expectations; the novel is and remains decent in its method. I have heard

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some say that in places it is downright pornographic. Well, but there is not a single word in it that would assert sex in any form; and indeed, how could such assertion be possible when it is expressly stated that in the home there is neither the Kama Sutra nor any person's reproductive organs (and those are denied most specifically!).

Non-being is already known to us in literature, but only as a certain Lack—of Something—for Someone. For example—of water, for one thirsty. The same applies to hunger (including the erotic), loneliness (the lack of others), etc. The exquisitely beautiful non-being of Paul Valéry is a lack of being that is bewitching for the poet; on such nothingnesses more than one poetic work has been built. But always it is exclusively a matter of Nothingness for Someone, or of non-being purely private, experienced on the individual level, therefore particular, chimerical, and not ontological (when I, thirsty, cannot have a drink of water, this does not mean, after all, the absence of water—as though water did not in general exist!). Such unobjective nothingness cannot be the theme of a radical work: Mme Solange understood this also.

In the first chapter, following the non-arrival of the train and the non-appearance of the Someone, the narration, continuing in its subjectless way, reveals that it is not spring, or winter, or summer. The reader decides on autumn, but again only because that last climatic possibility has not been disavowed (it, too, will be, but later!). The reader therefore is constantly thrown back on himself, but that is the problem of his own anticipations, conjectures, his hypotheses *ad hoc*. In the novel there is not so much as a hint of these. The contemplation of the unbeloved heroine in nongravitational space (i.e., space in which there is no force of attraction), which concludes the first chapter, might seem, it is true, obscene—but, again, only to one who will think *certain things* himself, on his own. The work relates only what such an unbeloved would *not* be able to do, and not what she *would* be able to do, in particular positions. This second part, the suppositional, is again the personal contribution of the reader, his completely private gain (or loss, depending on how one looks at it). The work even goes so far as to stress that the unbeloved does *not* find herself in the presence of any kind of male. Anyway, the beginning of the next chapter discloses, straight away, that this unbeloved is unbeloved for the simple reason that she *does not exist*. An entirely logical situation—is it not?

Then begins that drama of the diminution of space, of phallic-vaginal space also, which was not to the liking of a certain critic, a member of the Academy. The academician found it to be "an anatomical bore, if not a vulgarity." He found it, let us note, on his own and by himself, because in the text we have only further, progressive denials, of a more and more general nature. If the *lack* of a vagina can still offend someone's sensibilities, then we have gone far indeed. How can a thing be in bad taste which *is not there at all*?!

Then the pit of nothingness, still shallow, begins to increase disquietingly. The middle of the book—from the fourth to the sixth chapter—is consciousness. Yes, its stream, but, as we begin to realise, this is not a stream of thoughts about nothing, old-fashioned, *passé*. This is a stream of *no thoughts*. The syntax remains intact, untouched, inviolate, and it carries us over the depths like a perilously buckling bridge. What a void! But—we reason—even consciousness that is unthinking is still consciousness, is it not? Since that unthinkingness has limits . . . but this is a delusion, for the limitations are created by the reader himself! The text does not think; it gives us nothing. On the contrary, it takes away in succession that which was still our property, and the emotions in reading it are precisely the result of the ruthlessness of such subtraction: *horror vacui* smites us, at the same time entices; the reading turns out to be not so much the destruction of the world of lies of the novel as a form of annihilation of the reader himself as a psychic being! A woman wrote this book? Difficult to believe, considering its merciless logic.

IN THE LAST SECTION of the work comes the doubt whether it can possibly continue: it has, after all, been saying nothing for so long! Any further progress to the centre of nonexistence seems impossible. But no! Again a trap, again an explosion—or, rather, an implosion, the caving in of yet another nothingness! The narrator—as we know, there is no narrator; he is replaced by the language, that which itself speaks *by means of him*, like an

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imaginary "it" (the "it" in "it is thundering" or "it is lightning"). In the next-to-last chapter we observe with dizziness that the negative absolute has now been reached. The business of the non-appearance of some man, by some train, the unbeing of the seasons of the year, of the weather, of the walls of the house, of the apartment, of the face, the eyes, the air, the bodies—all this lies far behind us, on the surface, the surface that, eaten away by our further progress, by that all-consuming cancerlike Nothing, has ceased to exist *even as negation*. We see how simple-minded, naïve, how positively comical it was of us to expect that we would be given facts of some sort here, that here something or other would happen!

IT IS, THEREFORE, a reduction, to zero only to begin with; later, sinking into the abyss with projections of negative transcendence, it is a reduction also of transcendental entities, since by now no metaphysical systems are possible, and the néantic centre still looms before us. A vacuum, then, surrounds the narrative on every side; and behold, there are now its first incursions, intrusions, in the language itself. For the narrating voice begins to doubt itself. No, I put that poorly: "that which by itself tells of itself" collapses and vanishes somewhere; it already knows that it *is not*. If it still exists, it exists as a shadow, which is the simple lack of light; thus are these sentences the lack of existence. It is not the lack of water in the desert, not the maiden's lack of a lover, it is the *lack of self*. Had this been a novel written in the classical, traditional fashion, it would have been easy for us to say what took place: the hero would have been the sort of someone who begins to harbour suspicions that he neither manifests himself nor dreams himself, but is dreamt and manifested—*by* someone, and through hidden intentional acts (as if he is appearing to someone in a dream and only thanks to the dreamer may exist provisionally). From this would have come the rushing fear that these acts would stop, and surely they could stop at any moment—whereupon he would then fade away!

Thus it would have been in a more ordinary novel, but not with Mme Solange: the narrator cannot take fright at anything, because, you see, there is no narrator. What, then, occurs? The language itself begins to suspect, and then to understand, that there is no one besides itself, that, having meaning (to the extent that it has meaning) for anyone, for everyone, it thereby is not and never was or ever could have been a personal expression; cut off from all mouths at once, as a universally ejected tapeworm, as an adulterous parasite that has devoured its hosts, that has slain them so long ago that in it all memory of the crime, unknowingly committed, has been erased and obliterated, this language, like the skin of a balloon, till now resilient, firm, from which invisibly and faster and faster the air escapes, begins to shrivel. This eclipse of speech, however, is not a babel; and it is not fear (again, only the reader fears, experiencing *per procura*, as it were, that alien, totally depersonalised torment); for a few pages yet, for a few moments, there remains the machinery of grammar, the millstones of the nouns, the cogwheels of syntax grinding out more and more slowly—yet precise to the last—nothingness, which corrodes them through; and that is how it ends, in mid-sentence, mid-word. . . . The novel does not end: it ceases. The language, at the start, sure of itself in the first pages, naïve, healthily-commonsensically believing in its own sovereignty, eroded by a silent undertow of treachery, or, rather, arriving at the truth of its external, illegitimate origins, of its corruption and abuse (for this is the Last Judgment of literature), the language, having come to realise that it represents a form of incest—the incestuous union of non-being with being—suicidally disowns itself.

A woman wrote this book? Extraordinary. It ought to have been written by some mathematician, but one only who with his mathematics proved—and cursed—literature.

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I. Robert Sinai

What Ails Us and Why

On the Roots of Disaster & Decay

FOR OVER A CENTURY now some of the West's greatest seers, poets, and thinkers have been haunted by the vision that the modern world was threatened with disaster and decay. Carlyle, writing as early as 1829, saw the Age of Mechanism with all its skills and excellences producing simultaneously men grown mechanical in head and heart, in their modes of thought and feeling. In 1837 Kierkegaard wrote in his journals of the total and inescapable spiritual bankruptcy facing Europe. Burckhardt was beset from the middle of the 19th century onwards by the feeling that a new barbarism was about to break loose and that his civilisation would be stricken by a kind of galloping consumption "visiting deathly weakness on the forces now apparently sustaining us. . . ." And Nietzsche in the 1880s forecast the inevitable approach of nihilism and saw modern existence as characterised by the presence both of immense forces and powers and of unspeakable poverty, mediocrity and exhaustion.

The 19th century however believed that it could safely ignore these so-called prophets of doom. Bewitched by appearances, the leading groups of that confident age believed that they were marching forward into an epoch of unprecedented material and social progress made possible by the systematic application of science, reason, and justice. The First World War was to shatter these unfounded illusions.

In 1918 the first volume of Spengler's *The Decline*, or perhaps more accurately *Fall, of the West* was published. In 1919 Paul Valéry contemplating the horrible blood-letting of that senseless war, recorded the extraordinary shudder that had run through the marrow of Europe. From now on Europe too knew that it was mortal; it too became aware that a civilisation had the same fragility as a life; and that the abyss of history was deep enough to hold us all. Freud in his metapsychological writings of the 1930s saw civilisation as both a blessing and a curse and that it has been both throughout history. Human history is the record of this ambiguity; a repetitive cycle of progress and suffering, order and anarchy, achievement and failure, stability and upheaval, security and insecurity, liberation and enslavement, freedom and unhappiness. Being both a blessing and a curse it is ineluctably embroiled in a fatal and destructive dialectic: the perpetual restrictions on Eros ultimately weaken the life instincts and thus strengthen and release the very forces against which they were called up—those of destruction.

Men have in fact now brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that, as Freud predicted in 1929, by using them they could now very easily destroy one another almost to the last man. Another World War later and many more people would accept the notion of "The End of the Modern World", the title of a small book published in 1950 by the German-Italian theologian Romano Guardini. By the end of the 1960s this notion had not only become a commonplace in the minds of many millions of Europeans but, for the first time in their history, even in the minds of many Americans. In the 1970s the fears of decline and breakdown have become the stuff of everyday reality.

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IN ANALYSING ANY PERIOD of crisis and malaise we must distinguish between those "issue crises" which can be resolved within the existing system and a systemic crisis which calls the fundamental relationships of that system into question.

Issue crises point to some malfunctioning within a particular system: the tensions and conflicts which every system ineluctably generates but which can be resolved by conflict management, that is, public policy. Issue crises are local and can be handled by the different components which make up any ruling élite. Though divided over policy, the contestants and the major groups within that system share a common heritage of values. They not only continue to play by the established rules of the game but also believe in them. Even a significant social change does not lead to a radical disruption of the system in which it occurs.

A systemic crisis is of a different order of magnitude. It denotes that a society has collided against the limits and boundaries which by definition are inherent in every system. It is an expression of social entropy. It points toward exhaustion, decay, the return to chaos and a structureless uniformity. The system's potential has been used up and it is now caught in a cycle of saturation and diminishing returns. A systemic crisis infects all the subsystems—political, economic, social, ideological and personality—of which it is composed.

THE MODERN INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM, whether in its capitalist or socialist forms, is now facing the cruel prospect that the curve of exponential growth, prosperity and rising expectancies is beginning to turn downward toward decline. We have discovered that the Faustian drive toward unlimited growth and power is a dangerous process as well as a beneficial one. Growth exacts heavy costs. The uncontrolled and uncoordinated forces released by modern science, technology and politics, each functioning separately with an excess of power, only serve to injure the health and balance of the organism as a whole. The new capitalism of abundance has destroyed its traditional legitimacy which was based on a system of rewards rooted in a Protestant stratification of work that had once sustained it. The superabundance of goods produced by our modern industrial society, the hedonism and voluptuousness which it stimulates, promotes apocalyptic moods and irrational methods of behaviour at all levels of society, which are its natural counterparts. The very progress of civilisation leads to the release of increasingly destructive forces. Abundance does not bring contentment. Where there is more and more of everything, things are worth less and less; and prosperity without precedent produces only increased ugliness, boredom and spiritual trouble without precedent.

The continued pursuit of economic growth by the "advanced" nations is producing a whole series of crises which threaten to tear them apart. Impelled by the boundless ambitions of the technocrats, driven forward by the apparently irresistible momentum which the existing institutions—political, economic and technological—set up toward further economic and technological development, intoxicated by the ideals of economic growth and consumerism, caught in a frenzy of self-seeking and greed, the new industrial revolution is beginning to fissure the physical environment and to produce complex changes of ecological disruption. Industrial pollutants are spreading over the land, sea and air. Clamour, dust, fumes, congestion, and visual destruction are the predominant features in all our built-up areas. The population explosion is making our overgrown cities uninhabitable, and the mounting frustrations of urban life manifest themselves in such symptoms as a seemingly chronic restlessness and discontent, the break-up of families, the growth of drug addiction, obscenity, freak cults and violent forms of protest, self-assertion and defiance. The palpable mass of uniform life, the insect-immensity of the city or beach crowd, induces destructive spasms, a blind need to lunge out and make room. Man becomes a bewildered spectator to what goes on about him, the consumer an uprooted, free-floating, volatile and manipulated creature, the psyche is choked and smothered, and the civilisation produced by this galloping economy becomes unstable and filled with the most explosive tensions.

In fact, our new technology-based civilisation is imposing increasingly intolerable strains upon communities and personalities, and testing in the sharpest possible form man's very capacity to respond to changes which seem to move strongly against the grain of his instinctual needs. Indeed, the increase in noise levels, in the pace of work and commotion, in the intensity of artificial lighting may now be reaching pathological levels and triggering instincts of devastation.

THE POPULATION EXPLOSION and our obsession with economic growth are furthermore threatening the very existence of the technological-scientific civilisation which has been constructed over the

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last two hundred years. Some biologists see a "swarming stage" situation developing which could be terminated either through mass neurosis owing to overcrowding or through a great increase in predators, or there may occur such a concatenation of events that the population will gradually expand to occupy the whole medium in which it grows and then rapidly decline from the original focus outwards, partly through food shortage and partly poisoned by its own waste products. The same dire consequences confront us in the economic field where the process of unlimited economic growth is going to collide with the earth's finite, renewable and non-renewable resources. Unless an unprecedented revolution in attitudes, activities and class relations takes place, which is highly unlikely, a whole series of studies have warned us that in the next 50 to 100 years we are going to face a world which will have exhausted its reserves of a large number of its essential metals; will simply be unable to feed its burgeoning populations; and will be faced with a holocaust of unimaginable proportions. It is quite possible that the end of the industrial period will see mankind living in cities which have swollen and crumbled about its ears, its agricultural lands deteriorated and disappearing beneath bricks and mortar, and forced into the position of having to destroy the remaining fertility of the planet in a vain effort to survive.

In fact, capitalism, or industrialism in all its forms has created a sick civilisation. For this is a civilisation which has not only rebelled against and rejected the static traditional order but has also rebelled against and rejected the classical and traditional concept of human nature. As against a Plato who counselled that the soul should lead the affections; an Aristotle who described the good life as a cultivation not of some but of all human dispositions but only by limiting each to a Golden Mean; and a St Thomas who said that the human person should exercise "a royal and politic sovereignty" over the desires, modern man has made desires sovereign—and reason is the instrument for serving desires.

THIS MODERN MAN, as he has shaped our society and culture, is a being whose desires are limited not by his reason but only by the difficulty of getting more and more satisfaction. The desires of modern man are thus illimitable. In our age our social criterion of progress is that we must encourage and incite ourselves to be forever unsatisfied, to think nothing is enough, to seek the satisfaction of insatiable needs. The desires of modern man have consequently become irrational, are always expanding and forever unsatisfied.

The insatiable desires of modern man have therefore become an unending torture in which, as Walter Lippmann wrote, "they hunger though they eat, thirst though they drink, long for love though they cannot consummate it, seek and never find, achieve and always fail. . . ." Driven by these insatiable desires yet incapable of satisfying them, modern man is confused, anxious, depressed, frustrated, aimless and weary, discontented and increasingly lawless.

Never satisfied and forever seeking the unattainable, he is oppressed by inner confusion, the anxieties of insecurity and a profound unhappiness. Deprived of a rational measure upon his desires, he does not conserve his energy but spends it upon unattainable and unsatisfying ends. Lacking confidence in himself, deeply disoriented, his basic impulse is to escape from the pressure of his insatiable desires and from the endless conflicts with other men who are also driven by these same appetites. Actuated by his own inner disorder, driven by fear, inspired by fantasies of hope, he is corralled into organisations and bureaucracies and becomes part of a horde. And this horde of beings without autonomy, of individuals uprooted, isolated and disordered, cannot constitute a coherent society. This horde represents the new barbarism and it has arisen within modern civilisation rather than being an invasion from without.

THE MULTIPLE CRISES that confront our age spring not only from the revolutionary technological and economic transformations that have uprooted and disoriented millions of people but also arise from the failures of political institutions and of the political imagination. The old solidarities of class, party, and nation are beginning to break up. In place of coherent coalitions of class-based parties we have a proliferation of special interest groups and *ad hoc* voluntary associations each pursuing its own single interest at the expense of larger and more comprehensive public goals and policies. Both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are crumbling as organised class formations. The growing incoherence, fragmentation and "balkanisation" of society are accompanied if not caused by a growing decline of political authority. More and more public representatives see themselves and represent themselves as ombudsmen

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for their district or state rather than as representatives interested in effecting capacious national policies. The energies withdrawn from the old solidarities of class, party, and nation-state are now being increasingly projected upon the even older solidarities of tribes, ethnic groups, and regions.

But it is the decline of political authority that is the most ominous development. Our democratic and egalitarian age inexorably undermines uniqueness and creativity. Momentary desire, passing caprice and merely average taste are made supreme. By placing the power of choosing its rulers in the hands of an easily manipulated multitude democracy tends to be insensitive or hostile to cultural excellence and independence of mind and character. It prevents, as Tocqueville put it, original minds and energetic characters from rising above the crowd. In achieving political equality it erodes the social and cultural bases of human greatness. Theory and philosophy are despised or neglected, and technique and technicism are glorified. Large and noble themes are jettisoned in the general preoccupation with the useful, the finite, and the average. The individual is lost or overwhelmed by the sheer number of his "equals" and is filled with a sense of his own insignificance and weakness. Moved by an exaggerated taste for useful gratifications and a devotion to the present, democracies tend to an equal disregard for the past and the future. When these are combined with the worship of success in place of fame and of competitive achievement in place of individual ambition the results are conducive to a spirit of restlessness that breeds a profound sense of melancholy.

DEMOCRACY HAS ALSO TENDED to make uniformity a surrogate for "equality", and the populace is, as John Stuart Mill pointed out, particularly effective in penetrating and policing private life in order to assure that uniformity prevails. The popular ethos and social pressures over personal beliefs enslave the individual. Public opinion presses with enormous weight upon the mind of each individual and surrounds, directs and weakens him. As men grow more alike, each man feels himself feebler than all the rest. Lost among the sheer numbers of the crowd he mistrusts himself as soon as it assails him. Made uniform by all the vast collective forces of the modern world the average individual becomes more weak, more narrow-minded and dependent. The stalwart candour and independence of opinion which constitute the outstanding features in distinguished characters are rarely to be seen. And it becomes more difficult to find the highest talents and virtues among those who are in authority.

By reducing traditional social inequalities, and by destroying the idiosyncratic and the exclusive, democracy helps clear the way for the operation of the market and for the bureaucratic impulse. There is no doubt that it supports one of the principal instruments of our present system, the mass. The goods produced for the market are placed beyond effective criticism or judgment, regardless of their ugliness or the injury they do to individuals and societies by the fact that they could not be produced and their manufacturers could not make profits if they were not purchased and in this way sanctioned by the people. The great private and public bureaucracies could not function without the "Organisation Men" who staff them and the masses who support them. And much of the mass culture produced by the system is impregnable despite its outrageous vulgarity, because "It is what the people want." The elevation of the masses as the arbiters of taste reduces the very level of civilisation to the lowest common denominator and sows the seeds of degeneration.

ANOTHER FACTOR is the reluctance of the multitudes to support for long the discipline and tensions of great leadership. When circumstances do not absolutely demand otherwise and very often not even then, the people are apt to empower men of meagre energy and imagination; and even in times of crisis they may be won over by the demagogue who instigates and is carried to power by popular prejudice and hatred. Thus the roster of peace-time democratic leaders demonstrates the tendency of the people to empower mediocrities.

Looking at the matter from the side of the government, it can be said that democracy minimises the obligation to lead. It raises to power those who are ready to be subservient to the unexamined prejudices and preferences of the multitudes and to the practitioners of "permissive exploitation." Democracy thus offers an opening, if not an invitation, for men to seek power merely for its prestige and its material rewards and not for the capacity or the will to take a part in historical existence. The men who attain power are neither able nor willing to change thoughts and values, or to play lofty historic roles, but are merely satisfied to subordinate themselves to the ignorant and pliable mass. There are very few democratic political

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leaders with any inward assurance as to how our civilisation is to be changed and guided. They simply do not know where they are going, because, strictly speaking, they have no fixed road, no predetermined trajectory before them.

OPERATING in a world of mass disintegration and spiritual and intellectual impoverishment, mass democracy as a socially organised dissipation of social awareness must necessarily be opposed to the exercise of authority. Social conditions which eliminate solitude and reflection, which transfer decisions to groups rather than to individuals, and which surround all actions in routines not only tend to limit the opportunities for assuming and for feeling the weight of authority, but tend to root out men of the type who desire and can bear the burdens of authority. Thus, genuinely personal authority does not accord well with the major forces and institutions of industrialism or democracy. Technology and industry demand a calculable environment, as secure as possible against the intervention of personal will and initiative. Managers of course are needed; but they do not have the independence of character, the historic imagination, which is a quality of true authority, and their main qualification in any case is impersonal routine efficiency. Thus too, genuinely personal authority does not accord with a society which lives by the poll, by market research, and by the phantoms of mass opinion.

Authority is weakened by many other factors. The exaggerated respect for expertise, which is one of the most striking characteristics of industrial society, enhances the tendency of the people to mistrust or to fail to recognise mere sagacity or wisdom. Identifying narrow expertise with political and intellectual superiority, our mass democracies pay no attention to the discriminating power of wisdom. The concept of wisdom, in fact, can now be hardly seen or heard. Relying on expert advisers who are the prototypes of the mass-man of our age and who have mostly been wrong into the bargain, leaders tend to escape reflection and the burdens of decision. Vesting leadership in committees and other group organisations comes to replace character and insight. In the sphere of intellectual and spiritual activity, the impulse toward understanding is severely damaged by the organisation and the spread of group research projects, in which the place of the solitary individual thinker and scholar is taken by a committee or a group of

The Signs

NONE *of our country's difficulties is really the fault of bad men. Nor can they at all sensibly be fitted into the classical picture of politics as a struggle between the forces of freedom and slavery, of working class and middle class, of rich and poor, of exploiters and exploited; still less of good and evil.*

These classical concepts of conflict simply no longer apply. The trouble today is that science and technology have created a new range of social dilemmas which cannot be understood, let alone resolved, by reference to the old ideological formulae. Politicians go on talking as if they know the solutions and are prevented from putting them into practice only by "enemies" bent on causing mischief. In truth neither side knows the answers. Ignorance, not ill-will, is the root cause of the trouble.

NO ONE KNOWS **how to make the great bulk of industrial work sufficiently interesting to engage the workers' enthusiastic co-operation; how to restore dignity to labour. No one knows how to control inflation without the cure causing more social turbulence than the disease. No one knows how to reshape and re-organise cities so as to recreate among their inhabitants any sense of civic pride and loyalty. No one knows how to get the balance right between industrial growth and natural amenity. No one knows how to industrialise under-developed countries without in the long run destroying the very markets needed by the West for its economic survival. No one knows how to reconcile the new opportunities for world-wide human mobility, gravely aggravated by population explosions, with the old racial antipathies which prevent assimilation of strangers, particularly when colour is involved.**

SO GREAT *has been the scientific ingenuity of contemporary man that he has accelerated the pace of change to the point where the resulting dislocations and tensions exceed his political skill in coping with them. Never before has material progress so outdistanced the capacity of the human imagination to keep up with it, or adjust to it.*

SO TO EXPECT **the contemporary political leader, born in the 1920s, to rise to the challenge of the 1970s is not unlike supposing that a Stone Age politician would have been able to show the same wisdom as, say, Disraeli or Gladstone if the poor savage had been catapulted into a confrontation with**

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students working for a professor. All of these—the pandering to mass tastes and prejudices, the degradation of the person by the machine process, the reverence of the expert and the tendency to substitute bureaucratic order for personal reflection and choice—are illustrations of the decline of authority which the democratic system makes inevitable.

THE DECLINE of political authority in our modern democracies has even graver consequences for our civilisation. For one thing, it is the principal cause of our paralysis in the face of the ominous conditions that confront us. For another, if a people is not capable of identifying with and of paying some attention to the governing minority which alone can conceive and plan historical action it is condemned either to immobility or to blind and uncontrollable movement; and if a society has no respect for the creative minorities capable of original insight and communication it is condemned to ignorance and confined to the insipid and the purely narcissistic. The weakness of authority thus leads to the depersonalisation of the world. If persons are deprived of command, if the men in power are no longer capable of thinking and acting on behalf of the community in relation to the great world, then the world loses personal meaning and orientation. Personality means the attainment of a certain healthy degree of coherence and integration. Only through integration which comes through the creative actions and inspiring words of living men can life and society rise above the level of the impersonal and the mechanical. Thus the decline of authority means either that society is dismembered by centrifugal forces, its various segments losing touch with all central purpose and outlook, or else that it sinks into mechanistic and merely habitual order.

The decline of political and spiritual quality therefore appears to be associated with all those forces of mass disintegration—whether as causes or effects—which are so apparent as we look around us. The rise of the businessman, the bureaucrat, and then of the multitudes, with the displacement of the older governing groups; the loss of that grasp of reality which is expressed in a statesman's imagination, an artist's vision or a philosopher's wisdom; the impoverishment of the individual in huge bureaucratic organisations: in all of these one can observe the failure of personal command. The logic of the overall situation becomes obvious. The level of personal life is so

of the Times

the problems of Victorian England. No doubt the Stone Age politician, accustomed to solving everything with a club, would have tried to continue using the old methods, because he knew no other, just as the contemporary politician continues to mouth the slogans of Socialism, liberalism, democracy etc., because he, too, knows no others.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, *this explanation of our present discontents—that they are due to the failure of political science to keep pace with the natural sciences—is no cause for comfort; ignorance is just as dangerous as ill-will, if not more so. Such a climate is bound to be engendered if party politicians insist on polluting the atmosphere with partisan infections.*

THE TRUTH **which needs to be proclaimed is that politics in Britain today does not have to be divisive. When land was the only source of wealth and subsistence, as it was for most of human history, and there was not enough of it to go round, it made sense for politics to be understood as a life and death struggle, since repression was the inevitable concomitant of an age of scarcity. When the techniques exist, as they do today in Britain, for everybody to be prosperous, it makes no sense to *fight* about the cure of poverty—as little sense as it would for a people to *fight* about the cure of disease.**

IMAGINE *what would have happened to the progress of medical science if political agitators had succeeded in convincing the public that their illnesses must be blamed on the selfish privileges of the healthy or that the health of some was the cause of the sickness of others, or that the only way of curing those who were sick was by depriving the healthy of their health. Instead of doctors and scientists being allowed to get on with their job of discovering how to improve medical techniques for the benefit of all, this beneficent process would have become bogged down in political strife and discord, with the healthy set against the sick, and vice versa.*

IT MAKES **no more sense any longer to pit the poor against the rich than it would to pit the sick against the healthy. But because the human imagination is so clouded with agitational ideologies which prevent a clear perception of this truth, and no seer or prophet has yet found the clarity of vision capable of dispelling them, there they remain, preventing the light of reason from ever breaking through.**

Peregrine Worsthorne
in the SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

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low that freedom becomes purely formal and devoid of meaning. It is a freedom which is both empty and oppressive. Man is exalted by precept but degraded in practice. Personal existence becomes helpless, frustration and resentment increase, the community is fractured, men tend to flee from themselves and from concern with public affairs, and states become ungovernable.

THE ECONOMIC, technological and political forces of our age fashion a new human type, the mass-man. The appearance of the mass-man, as Ortega y Gasset has argued, is one of the formidable facts of the period in which we live. The mass-man is the average man. Instead of making great demands on himself, piling up difficulties and duties, as does the man who belongs to the "creative minority", he demands nothing special of himself, lives only for the moment, imposes no effort on himself toward excellence, and is a mere buoy that floats on the waves. This commonplace man with his commonplace mind has now acquired the assurance to proclaim the rights of the commonplace and to impose them wherever he wills. Instructed only in the techniques of modern life without being educated in them, inoculated with the pride and power of modern instruments but without understanding the awesome power they possess or the immense problems they pose, the mass-man gives the impression of a primitive man suddenly risen in the midst of civilisation. Common, inert, and ubiquitous, immobile and ravenous, he crushes beneath him everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual, qualified and select.

Thus anybody who is not like everybody, who does not think like everybody, is either eliminated or reduced to silence and impotence. Of course, it is clear that this "everybody" is not everybody. Everybody was in the past the complex unity of the mass and the divergent, specialised, creative minorities. Today, however, "everybody" is the mass alone and this includes the élite as well.

THE MASS-MAN is to be found not only among the working classes but throughout all the ranks of society. The new middle classes, employed in our large corporations, government bureaucracies and universities, have been turned into mass-men. Without property, which could provide them with an identifiable area of freedom, the members of the new middle class live lives of perpetual dependency. Its members are employees and their livelihoods are always contingent on the approval and good will of the organisations which employ them. Such a class will inevitably be cautious, conventional, superficial, and attuned to the sensibilities of those around them. Controlled by the organisations by which this class is employed, its members become part of the function they perform. The individual is regarded with indifference. No one is indispensable. He is not himself; having no more genuine individuality than one pin in a row, he is a mere object of general utility. Those most effectively predestined to such a life are persons without any serious desire to be themselves. In order to advance he must be able to make himself liked. He must persuade and at times corrupt; he must hold his tongue, circumvent and lie when necessary; and avoid showing any independence beyond that which might be required. Slaves of their functions, deracinated and reduced to the level of a thing, the new middle classes have no sense of rank or difference, are immersed in the multitude and bereft of genuine human attributes.

THE MASS CIVILISATION which dominates us is ruled by élites which have also been infected with the values of the mass. The élites are coordinated by the very masses they lead, they are nothing but the complement of the many. Although the élites perform different and higher functions they are but others in essence with the many. The élites can only reach their influential positions by becoming the functionaries of the masses, through being attentive to their wishes and by never running counter to their demands. They do not regard themselves as endowed with independent selfhood but merely as the exponents of the multitude which backs them up. At bottom they are as powerless as the masses they are presumed to lead, only marginally of greater competence than the managed, the executants of whatever may be re-echoed by the average will of the multitude.

What they are is not measured by an ideal, is not related to the genuine needs of the society, but is based upon their conception of the fundamental qualities of mankind as manifested in the majority and as dominant in action. History is thus now dominated by the masses rather than by richly developed individuals. Mass society has no place for self-made and creative personalities, nor has it any desire for independence and originality in either

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the management or the conduct of life. Neither liberty of external action nor freedom of internal judgment has any unique value for it. A system devised by geniuses is now run by nonentities.

THE GROWTH AND EXPANSION of mass society has additionally affected the worlds of learning and the arts.

Mass literacy has, as ought to be more than apparent by now, lowered the general level of culture and understanding. The majority of people who have learned how to read and write during the last hundred years have made very little use of it for their own enlightenment. The amount of ignorance in the world has in no way decreased as compared with the past. The vast expansion of higher education has led to a catastrophic lowering of academic standards. The universities now turn out hordes of graduates whose smattering of knowledge is a danger to themselves and to the society. The stretching out of schooling, made necessary by modern industrial conditions, has led to its increasing thinness. Educational incapacity has become one of the most serious problems facing our modern world.

The purveyors of learning, moreover, the teachers and potential teachers, have also been infected by the standards and values of mass society. The Higher Capitalism has invaded the campus and the most successful faculty members have become entrepreneurs of research, lavishly funded by government and foundations. The project rather than the serious book, the institute rather than the classroom have become the principal identifying marks of this new breed. What passes for scholarship has become an adjunct of power. The most successful teachers, scholars, and intellectuals have become ideamongers, people whose principal talent consists in their ability to disseminate those general ideas that have become respectable and popular. Instead of the older specialist-scholar who may have learnt more and more about less and less, these new intellectuals, avid for publicity, say less and less about more and more. Corrupted by their search for worldly success and approval, our modern intellectuals and scholars have degraded learning and betrayed the high calling of independent scholarship and thought. Most of our successful scholars and intellectuals have gone on a trip to Hog Island—the place where they feel they have finally "made it" and found paradise—and have given their souls not for the conquest of a whole world but for free food and drink.

The inflation of society, the expansion of the mass media, the growth of higher education have all diluted the quality of intellectual life. In the universities men and women who formerly would have been fortunate to have become clerks have now become academics. Instead of seeking truth they accumulate what passes for correct information and interpretations. Lacking personal security and self-confidence they are incapable of thinking for themselves and accept whatever passes for the current orthodoxy. In this world of increasing intellectualisation the people who dare to form their opinions and tastes independently become fewer and fewer. The superficially revolutionary character of our times only hides a dreary expanse of intellectual stagnation. Our most daring minds and most outstanding people have only been toying with the most shallow and frivolous ideas. Everywhere we see laziness of thought, and imaginations captivated by routine and outworn categories. With a few exceptions the performance of the intellectuals during the last 50 years has been generally characterised by cowardice, opportunism, dishonesty and irresponsibility. Ruled by opinion and the latest fad the minds of the intelligentsia have been corroded and literacy has fallen apart into a state of general decomposition.

HOWEVER, SOME OF THE CLEAREST expressions of decline and decadence are to be found in the arts. All the arts are in a state of pattern dissolution. They show no unity of topic, style and objective. Eclectic and unintegrated, they present an incoherent potpourri or hash of all sorts of topics, styles, and objectives. The break-through to functional forms in architecture has thus quickly enough given way to machine-like buildings which are peeling and ageing more rapidly than the huts of the peasants in the Middle Ages. The revolt against the limitations of the traditional framework of the octave scale has not only led to experiments in atonality, however monotonous the sound they produce, but to the even more monotonous and pervasive rhythms of rock-and-roll, with all its barbaric cries and sounds manufactured by the latest technology. In painting and sculpture the work of art as a "cultural object" has been dissolved and the distinction between subject and object and between art and life erased; and both have been decomposed into spaces, environments, motions, media-mixes, happenings, and the creation of

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"man-machine" interaction systems. Modern art is not only characterised by absurdity and extravagance but it has become the respectable salesman of the commerce of chaos.

THE LITERATURE of the past two decades has perhaps most clearly touched the nerve of the age. In reading the literature of the period one has the feeling of a world infected by madness and leading toward some cosmic disaster. The world is represented as having lost all coherence and consistency, the absolutes have vanished, and man lives unawares on floating ground. Many of their protagonists are schizoid, insanity rather than normalcy has become the touchstone of reality. The individual is portrayed as a mere thing batted back and forth by the fanatical pettiness of huge and impersonal institutions. The events that are described seem to be gratuitous and the line between good and evil no longer exists. The phenomena of everyday life assume a grotesque appearance. They wrinkle and disintegrate, they crack; and man seems to fall into a bottomless abyss. Some see the modern world, and America in particular, as a delusive wonderland of colliding forces where love as often as hate leads to violence. For others the excremental vision has become tactile. And there are individuals who see the world of thieves, rapists and murderers as the only honest world, for here the profoundest and most forbidden human impulses are expressed in direct, primitive terms. The tremors of apocalypse, warning of some impending holocaust, have penetrated the modern sensibility.

According to critics (George Steiner, among others) the old verbal culture is in decline and there is everywhere a general retreat from the word. The primacy of logic is now drawing to a close. Rhetoric and the arts of conviction which it disciplines are in almost total disrepute. The democratisation of high culture has adulterated the products of classic literacy. More and more of the informational energy required by a mass-consumer society is being transmitted pictorially. A large segment of mankind between the ages of 13 and 25 now lives immersed in a throbbing sound culture where activity such as reading, writing, private communication, learning, previously framed with silence, now takes place in a field of strident vibrato. The decline of the old verbal culture, the increasing importance of the language of mathematics and the idiom of the computer, the spread of pop and rock music as the lingua franca of youth—all presage the emergence of a diminished or post-culture. The high culture based on privilege and hierarchical order and sustained by the great works of the past and the truths and beauties achieved in the tradition destroyed itself in two World Wars. We are now living in a cruel "late stage in Western affairs" marked by feelings of disarray, by a regress into violence and moral obtuseness, by a central failure of values in the arts and in the graces of personal and social behaviour. Confused and bombarded, modern man is suffused with fears of a new "Dark Age" in which civilisation itself as we have known it may disappear or be confined to the small islands of archaic conservation.

THE CATASTROPHES and transformations of the modern age have thus had the most pronounced effects on the life and condition of man in this period of human history. Two World Wars have annihilated decisive reserves of intelligence, of nervous resilience and of political talent. Our culture, as T. S. Eliot has written, is "*A heap of broken images . . . mere withered stumps of time*", from which the spirit has fled. The expansion of social organisation, of the range of man's reach into the universe, of man's control of natural forces—all this has proceeded at the expense of personality.

The gain in the expansion of the genus has gone hand in hand with the loss in selfness of the individual. Over-civilisation and dehumanisation co-exist and co-develop. The spread of the greed for life to the masses has destroyed the highest spiritual culture, which is always aristocratic and based upon quality. The age of quantity now reigns supreme. The human mind itself has begun to deteriorate in quality and cultural level. The new men of power are trivial, superficial and pusillanimous, and are destitute of that loftiness of feeling which spells the above-average ability, which is essentially dependent upon a brooding consciousness of the past and its awful power and reposes on a deep recognition of the difference between the great tragic facts of human existence and the transient dross of our day-to-day activities. Culture has lost its inherent value, and therefore the will to culture has begun to die out. There is no more will to genius, and genius has become rarer. Vulgarisation and proletarianisation have invaded the arts and sciences, philosophy and language,

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religion and ethics, manners and institutions. The few original minds who seek an escape find that the public roads are barred. Despite the movement and commotion of our times, ideas, dependent as they are on publicity, move more slowly than they have for a long time. This period of decadence was foreseen by Tocqueville who warned his contemporaries that they ought not to mistake appearance for reality.

> "We have witnessed very rapid changes of opinions in the minds of men; nevertheless it may be that the leading opinions of society will before long be more settled than they have been for several centuries in our history. . . . It is believed by some that modern society will always be changing. I fear that it will ultimately be too invariably fixed in the same institutions, the same prejudices . . . so that mankind will be stopped and circumscribed; that the mind will swing backwards and forwards forever without begetting fresh ideas; that man will waste his strength in senile and purposeless trifling; that though in continual movement, humanity will no longer advance."

THE SYSTEMIC CRISIS which confronts us is thus nothing new in history. We find it so difficult to understand our troubles and ailments because we have not been able to escape from our ludicrous modern conceit that with our science, our industry, and our democracy we could escape the awesome and remorseless fate that has overtaken all previous social systems. But the rise and fall of empires and civilisations, of particular governments and ruling classes within a given civilisation, of specific cultural traditions or of eminent families in a community, or of various types of voluntary associations, or even of more minor historical concretions only illustrate the tragic dialectic of civilisation.

All social systems are ruled by an iron law of decadence. All civilisations or social systems decline and fall because they have made mistakes in meeting some new challenge or complexity of history. Each civilisation makes some fatal mistake in the end and perishes. Sometimes they perish because the pull or push of power has impelled them to extend themselves beyond the limits of human possibilities. Sometimes the ruling class which has been instrumental in organising a society has become so rigid, unresponsive, greedy, and repressive that it systematically destroys what it had created. Sometimes the strategies and techniques of yesterday are falsely applied to new situations and problems to which they are not relevant. This mistake reflects that form of intellectual hubris which blindly raises contingent factors in history to the eminence of false absolutes. All these conditions and acts constitute that "nemesis of creativity" which Toynbee has so convincingly analysed and is expressed in that "idolisation" of "an ephemeral self" or an "ephemeral institution" or an "ephemeral technique" of which all civilisations are sooner or later guilty. Modern technical civilisation is declining because it is wrong-headedly worshipping technical advance as a final good and because it is now harnessing its techniques either for the destructive purposes of war or for the preparation for war or because these technological forces are now escaping from human control and appear to us in the form of man's destruction of his environment and technical breakdown.

CIVILISATIONS, in short, decline for a whole variety and range of reasons. Civilisations decline as much from the infinity of the will as from the finitude of reason, from demonic irrationality as from mechanical bureaucratic inertia. Some civilisations perish because they rest on their oars; others because they come to suffer from the aberrations of outrageous behaviour with its consequent loss of mental and moral balance. Some suffer from the intoxication of victory while others are so intemperate in waging wars of annihilation against their neighbours or in preparing for wars against them that they deal unintended destruction to themselves. Some civilisations perish from the sins of sensuality, others from the sins of pride.

At all times we see man's thoughts translated into acts and these transformed into their opposite; and his dreams when translated into deeds attain that which he least dreamed of. In all cases we are confronted with man, insecure, anxious and restless, swollen with self-love, driven by the will-to-power and by inordinate appetites, corrupted by pride, self-intoxication and self-deception, who sooner or later sins against the laws of proportion and harmony and, swept along by blind, headstrong and ungovernable impulses, is plunged into decay or self-destruction.

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Esther Salaman

Memories of Einstein

I HAD BEEN ACCEPTED at Kiev University in the autumn of 1917 to study mathematics, but my father, like other fathers, would not let me leave home in such a time. In the years that followed the October Revolution I was immersed in a life not of my own choice: civil war, pogroms, doubt, love—and then more doubts. In the end my instinct, rooted in experience, told me to get out of Russia: I had nothing to fear from the Bolsheviks—they welcomed me—but I could not accept their new intolerant religion. I got to Palestine in January 1920. Of the group who set out, friends since school days, two were murdered, two failed to get on to the boat; only three—the man I was in love with, his sister, and I—succeeded. And I would have been left behind in hospital with typhoid if the boat had not been delayed by the Bolsheviks.

I finally came to Berlin at the end of the summer of 1922. A friend had talked to Einstein about me; he agreed to sponsor me for the University, and invited me to come and see him.

I entered his study: an oblong room, shelves of books and reprints on the two long walls, the room neither too big nor too small, a window at the far end, and Einstein sitting at right angles to it at a plain table, the other upright chair facing the window—nothing to disconcert one about the man or the place.

ESTHER POLIANOWSKY SALAMAN *was a pupil of Einstein in Berlin from 1922–25. Since 1925 she has lived and worked in England. Her books include "Poems from the Russian", translated jointly with Frances Cornford (Faber, 1944); "The Fertile Plain" (Hogarth Press, 1956; Abelard-Schuman, 1957); a study of involuntary memory, "A Collection of Moments" (Longman, 1970); and "The Great Confession" (Allen Lane, 1973). Parts of the material used in her* ENCOUNTER *memoir were broadcast on the BBC Third Programme in 1955. She is completing a fictionalised autobiographical novel, a trilogy covering the years 1925–1941.*

He rose and shook hands: "You want to study mathematics? Could I give you a test?"

"No good: so much has happened to me in the last five years, and I haven't given mathematics a minute's thought." And then, looking at him, I added: "I loved mathematics at school."

"The wife of a good friend of mine is a Russian mathematician. I know from her how well mathematics was taught in Russia." He picked up a sheet of paper and wrote a letter sponsoring me.

LATER, Einstein introduced me to his assistant, Doctor Gromer, who came from Russia.

He was very tall, his head enormous, but the worst were his hands: huge. He suffered from acromegaly. Einstein left us; we were in the garden at the back of the University. Doctor Gromer asked, with a pathetic smile, "May we talk Russian?" and after a few sentences: "Your Russian is so good, so good. I studied Talmud till thirteen, and only then began Russian. But it was mathematics that captured my mind as a boy."

When I next ran into Einstein, he stopped me: "Doctor Gromer likes you, he would like to help you with your mathematics."

"Impossible, I could not stand his deformity."

Einstein looked at me: "I can understand someone thinking that . . . but you don't mind saying it. . . ."

I did see Doctor Gromer sometimes: he told me that Einstein had been very good to him. Some great discoveries, he said, if not made by one man would soon be made by another; but if Einstein hadn't had the ideas of Relativity, it might not have been discovered for another fifty years.

IN MY THIRD YEAR I saw Einstein rather often. He came regularly every Thursday to the students' seminar in the old *Reichsanstalt*. I was to discuss a paper about alpha particles. When the day came I was terribly nervous. Einstein was in the front row, with his pipe; beside him was Max von Laue. As I

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was showing my slides, I saw in the semi-darkness Einstein looking at me as if to say "Don't worry." The paper raised a difficult problem. A certain Dr Szilard[1] got up afterwards and suggested a solution in a long statement; but I could not quite follow. Einstein turned to him and said: *"Schlau, aber nicht wahr* (Clever, but not true)", and he restated the problem, said what we knew and did not know about it so clearly and simply that everyone was satisfied.

THE REALLY IMPORTANT event to me that autumn was news from the *Frankfurter Zeitung* that they would publish a translation of my description of a week, at Christmas 1918, when Petlura's Cossacks were roaming through our town murdering Jews.[2]

I had a letter from Einstein. "Your articles have made a deep impression on me. I have a problem in physics which might suit you." That was in December 1924. When he saw me next he asked: "It's all true, what you wrote?"

"It all happened to me, but I described only one week. . . ."

My literary friends who had read my description of the pogrom wanted to know why I was studying physics. I was a writer. I had known this from the age of 14: it made it very hard to leave Russia. But now I had no roots anywhere. Didn't Einstein soon see that I was not a physicist? Of course he did, but he and some of my other professors probably thought I might make a good teacher.

I was now often at the Einsteins. We talked of the problem he had set me, though I have no recollection of it: it is more than fifty years ago. But the lapse of time is not the reason why I have forgotten it; my heart was not in science but in literature.

STRANGERS WERE ALWAYS interrupting him. Once the concierge came up and asked him to come to the window—his wife and I looked out too. There was a woman standing in the doorway. "She won't go away", the concierge said, "She says the Professor has jilted her! Don't you go down, I'll try and get rid of her."

A pleasanter experience was when two orthodox Jews from Poland arrived: they said it prolonged life to shake hands with the great Jew. I told Einstein this.

There was a peculiar look in his eyes, and I was curious to know what he was thinking. I had been embarrassed by the men's rhetoric, but now I was annoyed with myself for not having translated word for word; I had not told him they had also said that it is a blessing to set eyes on a king. "Excuse us for taking your precious time", they said, and took their leave.

One day Frau Einstein was rung up by the police to say they had arrested a tramp who claimed he had been drinking with Einstein all night: was it true? When she told them that her husband had been playing the violin all evening they said they were coming round for her to sign a statement that Einstein had never left the house. He never seemed put out.

An Indian fellow-student, *B* (a relative of Tagore), confided his troubles to me. *B* had had an affair with a German woman; she had left her husband and had had *B*'s child. But the husband and wife had made it up again, and they wouldn't let him see his little girl except for money: he couldn't go on paying. Not long after this, *B* told me he had been to see Einstein and told him of his sorrows. Einstein had written a message to the mother; *B* showed it to me. It was a long letter in Einstein's own hand. He pleaded with her without sentimentality (without introducing God), on human, understandable grounds, asking her to let the father see his child. But it was no use; the woman didn't take the slightest notice.

EARLY IN THE SUMMER TERM of 1925 Einstein asked me if I had worked through Relativity.

"But I wouldn't understand it!"

"Once a thing is discovered it's not very difficult to understand. Don't go to my lectures—it would be a waste of your time. But try reading the four lectures I gave in Princeton. If you can come with me I'll give you a copy."

Still, I went to his lecture that afternoon. (He was a little bored by lecturing. He lectured in the Auditorium on Unter den Linden—occasionally local prostitutes would slip in to catch a glimpse of the great man, and all eyes suddenly turned to them; amused, he would raise his eyebrows.) When it was over I moved up to join him. There was a queue of some six or seven Japanese students. Each one had a large picture of Einstein, and asked him

[1] This was of course Leo Szilard, who in the '30s first suggested to Rutherford and Einstein the possibilities of a nuclear weapon. (See Edward Shils' memoir of Szilard in ENCOUNTER, December 1964).

[2] I have recreated those early years of the Revolution in an autobiographical novel, *Two Silver Roubles* (Macmillan, 1932).

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to sign it. Finally it was over and I asked him, "Why do they want your signature?"

"Bitte, sagen Sie mir! (Please, you tell me!)", and we set out for the underground.

I thought that only silly people wanted autographs and only of film stars. I did not know then that I had nearly failed to get into the University because Einstein's sponsoring letter had been stolen from my file!

NEXT TIME I went to the Einsteins I told him I had enjoyed the four Princeton lectures. I was specially glad that Newton's equations had come out as a first approximation: I did not like the idea that such a great mind was completely wrong. He smiled: "Good." But I could not understand a four-dimensional world. He advised me not to imagine it.

We were coming out of the study when he said, "I find sailing restful—would you like to come with me?" I said I would, and saw Frau Einstein in the large light entrance hall. Einstein remembered that he had not given me the paper he had been talking about, on the Quantum Theory of Gases, went back and brought it.

I was looking at the title when Frau Einstein said: "Your sight is not good." It came into my mind to tell her not to be worried (she had told me she was never jealous, because Einstein did not like intellectual women), but what I actually said was: "An oculist told me that if I go on correcting the image without glasses, I'll be blind at forty. But I hate glasses."

"Sind Sie wirklich so eitel?" she asked ("Are you really so vain?"). She sounded friendly: "You would be no help in a sailing boat." I had expected that, and I added "I can't even swim well."

I looked at Einstein. I shall never forget his face, partly amused, but there was something else I could not read.

THAT SUMMER it came to me that I ought not to stay much longer in Germany. I had many reasons.

One experience which had shocked me concerned a friend—I will call her Eugenie. We attended Professor Schur's lectures on Pure Mathematics, and we both admired him. (He was a Russian Jew, who had been in Berlin for many years. I did not know till much later that he had a worldwide reputation among mathematicians.) The great physicists, Max Planck and Albert Einstein, were poor lecturers, but some of the mathematicians were superb. To listen to Professor Schur building the Galois Theorem was the kind of pleasure that musical people claim from a great classic symphony conducted by a great musician. Eugenie asked me to give a paper with her in Schur's seminar, which pleased me: she was a much better mathematician than I.

She invited me to her home—it was easier to work there. They were Prussians, living in a large house in its own grounds in Wannsee. We had an enjoyable morning's work, but at lunch with her mother I was surprised that neither knew I was Jewish. Usually I took care to tell everyone, to avoid the embarrassment of someone making an anti-Semitic remark.

Eugenie, while seeing me to the station, informed me that when Walter Rathenau, the Foreign Minister, was murdered, her brother had rushed in to tell them. He hoped that Einstein would be the next; and she understood how he felt. I had also heard such a crazy hope expressed by another student.

I could not tell such a painful story to Einstein. Paul Dirac asked me recently whether it would have been a help to Einstein if I had told him. I said that I did not think so; he had had a warning when his friend Rathenau was murdered, but Einstein's mind was on his work.

Watching Einstein walk across the forecourt to give his lecture, I could not imagine a sane person wishing him harm. But the seeds of Hitler's Germany were already there in the Weimar Republic ten years before Hitler actually came to power in Berlin and the insane tragedy became inevitable.

WHEN I TOLD EINSTEIN I wished to leave Germany, he invited me to come to talk with him. "What's the date?" he asked, when I got there. "I'd forgotten that there is a meeting of the Academy of Science. Will you be going to the University this morning? Good, then we'll go together. We shall have plenty of time."

While he was putting on his hat and overcoat Frau Einstein whispered to me, "Don't let the Professor walk, it's bad for his health." As we got into the lift I suddenly felt nervous of his presence. "What is this?" I wondered. It was not the same as respect, admiration, affection: I knew it was not pride—anyone could talk to Einstein. I had never felt anything like it before: I was in awe of his spirit. Being still young (I was twenty-five) I was surprised

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that it should make my heart beat faster, like love or fear.

"What a lovely morning", he said, when we came into the street. "Don't let's go by Underground. It won't do me any harm to walk. How are things going?"

"Thank you, not really well. I haven't got any further with the problem you set me. I shall never be a theoretical physicist, I shall never be creative."

"You've picked up quite a lot in a short time. Very few women are creative. I should not have sent a daughter of mine to study physics. I'm glad my wife doesn't know any science, although my first wife did." From a Polish physicist he had introduced me to, who was writing a book on Einstein's theory, I gathered that Einstein's first wife's interest in physics had been a burden to him. (She couldn't cook or keep the house clean. His second wife—Einstein's cousin—was an excellent housewife, and looked after him well.)

"Madame Curie was creative", I said.

"We spent some holidays with the Curies", he said. "Madame Curie never heard the birds sing!"

We had entered the Tiergarten, the morning was very bright. "You're frowning again."

I looked at him, and without a moment's thought, announced "My personal life is in order", which was far from the truth.

"What are your reasons for wanting to leave Germany?"

"If I start on a *Doktorarbeit*", I said, "it will take me three years, and after that I may never leave Germany. I don't want to become a German."

"I'm not a German", he said, "but a Swiss Jew, and I'm glad I lived in a real democracy. The Germans call me a German when it suits them, and a Jew when it doesn't. I don't love the Germans, but my reasons are probably different from yours. They are foreign to you in temperament. I don't mind their slow temperament—I don't know how to express it."

IT HAD RAINED in the night, and I saw he was stepping carefully to avoid the little puddles. "My shoes need mending", he said, looking down at them. His grey overcoat was old too; in his black hat with the broad brim he looked quite unlike the passers-by. "Talking about leaving here", he said, "it would be good if you could go to Leyden. There you would find a person who would understand you, my friend Paul Ehrenfest's wife. Ehrenfest has Lorentz' chair. His wife is a Russian, a mathematician. Both of them are very, very good teachers."

I explained that I could not afford to go to Holland, that I must go to a country where I could earn by teaching Russian. "I've been asked to go to Russia", he said, "but I don't want to be shown things, and then told what I have seen, and the world told 'what Einstein said'. I'm going to the Engadine for my summer holidays, partly for my health, but I'm not looking forward to it: too many rich people." He returned to physics: he said he was not making any progress.

"What about the new paper you've given me?" I asked. "That's only by the way." What he was trying to do, he said, was to unify the gravitational and electromagnetic fields. "You see Relativity is in the past, and what I am trying now doesn't come off. I've never worked systematically, my knowledge isn't very wide. I'm pursued by this or that idea, and that's how I work. I have little exchange of ideas with other scientists, and not much contact with people. I look forward to the Colloquium on Wednesdays, but hardly anything ever comes to me from outside, only from inside."

"Then you must love Goethe", I said.

"Yes, from that special aspect, but I don't know him well. What would you advise me to read?"

"*Iphigenia, Faust.*"

"I can't enjoy *Faust*" he said, "Goethe's *Weltanschauung* is that of a creative man, but what can others do with it?"

I did not understand that—not then. I asked him if he had read Dostoevsky. "Yes, one can't explore further the darkness of the soul." Again I was surprised. Dostoevsky had helped me to get over my terrible homesickness and fear when I first came to Germany.

"I want to go to France", I said, "to know French really well so that I could enjoy French literature. I would like to find myself in new surroundings."

"I never long for that. I like Paris, but I don't want to go there, or anywhere. I should not like to learn a new language; I don't like new food or new clothes. I'm not with people much, and I'm not a family man. I want my peace (*Ich will mein Ruhe haben*). I want to know how God created this world (*wie sich Gott die Welt beschaffen*). I'm not interested in this-or-that phenomenon, in the spectrum of this-or-that element. I want to know His thoughts, the rest are details."

HIS SOFT BROWN EYES, and even more his voice, revealed something of him. His voice was always calm, it sounded as if he were patiently talking to a child and, at the same time, as if it came from a

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long way off. His voice was a protection of his inner self rather than an expression of it. He felt kindly towards people, but not intimate with them, not even sure of them.

"Yes, about the Germans", he said. "I've found the answer; they're not religious." I did not like to ask him what he meant.

He talked about Palestine, and asked me whether my brother had found suitable work there. He said, "Palestine is dear to me, I hope to go there from time to time, but I'm afraid of chauvinism."

I told him that the pioneers were not chauvinists, that the young people had gone there from Russia hoping to give new prophets to the world. "Yes, there has been a lot of good in us", he said "and a lot of bad. The bad is more obvious."

WE HAD WALKED for about an hour-and-a-half. As we turned into the Unter den Linden, he said, "If you've decided to leave here, I should go to Cambridge to the Cavendish Laboratory." He talked of the people who were working there. "England has always produced the best physicists", he said. "I'm not thinking only of Newton. There would be no modern physics without Maxwell's electromagnetic equations: I owe more to Maxwell than to anyone. But remember in England everything is judged by achievement *(Alles ist auf Leistung angestellt)."* This frightened me. "There is a Russian there, Kapitza; the Ehrenfests know him and like him. He's had a very ingenious idea of how to produce large magnetic fields. He will help. Have you got a lecture this afternoon?"

"Not till yours at six."

"A waste of time."

"I went to Professor Spranger's lectures on the philosophy of Relativity. More difficult than your four Princeton lectures."

"No wonder", he said; "the less they know about physics the more they philosophise. Philosophers used to know all there was to be known of science. In itself philosophy is insubstantial (*die Philosophie ist substanzlos*). But you could read Eddington. . . . You know Lise Meitner is talking today at the Academy. If you like you can come in and listen to her from the gallery."

The meeting had already begun. I got out some paper to make notes of what Lise Meitner was saying. But I began instead to write down all I could remember of what Einstein had said.

I very rarely make notes of something which has affected me deeply: I don't like spying on myself. I think I was afraid to forget some of what Einstein had said, especially what I had not understood. Why did he say that the Germans were not religious? He himself did not believe any dogma.

I DID NOT give up the idea of France at once. I was living with a doctor's family: the doctor, a good man, said, "I think you ought to listen to Einstein's advice. Please let me lend you £100."

When I saw Einstein next, he said: "You'll need a grant. I'll write to Weizmann and ask him if he can get you one. You will stick to physics, won't you?"

"I can't tell. I don't know whether I'll be good enough."

"After you get a Ph.D. in Cambridge you could become a lecturer in Jerusalem."

"I can't promise."

"But if someone gets you a grant and you abandon physics, you prejudice the chances of the next applicant."

"I think such grants should have no conditions."

"So you're a Bolshie after all."

"And you are a bourgeois."

We shook hands.

SO IN 1925 I WENT to Cambridge, married there, and when I next saw Einstein I had had a child and begun a novel. In 1930 Einstein was given an honorary degree and an evening party at Trinity College. The men wined and dined for two hours, and only then came up to the Master's Lodge where Lady Thomson and her daughter were entertaining the ladies.

J. J. Thomson was walking round with Einstein, telling him about the famous portraits. Einstein looked his usual calm self. Francis Cornford asked me to come with him, and we approached J. J. "Master, here is a pupil of Einstein." J. J. stepped aside. Einstein looked very pleased to see me, and I introduced my husband. Einstein said he had heard from his friends about us.

It was a happy meeting. Then Eddington approached him, and Einstein's face lit up. We left them together.

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Brian Lee

From Letchworth

What excuse could anyone have for not liking
a pleasant-enough town such as ours, the more he grew
at home in it, the more he grew like it? One must

appreciate all that has been done for one,
the care and the forethought that have gone into
the choice of the site, undulating land, neither

too steep, to tire the old on their afternoon strolls,
nor flat, too dull for the young, that by pleasing the two
extremes, pleases us all; land like a gentle swell

underlying other agreeable features; roads well-disposed
beneath the amenity of leaves, parks to stroll through,
the acres of the original wilderness kept

as a haunt for our boys: blessings of the same kind intention.
Here, you cannot seize that precise moment when you
have passed from town to country from country to town;

gardens shape themselves slowly out of land already
plotted and bounded; hedges hide one house from the view
of its equally desirable neighbour;

and what might be lanes reach to the centre of things,
from which our industries are far removed . . . there are few
provisions for recreation that we lack—all flow

profusely from a single solicitude. We have every
society a society should possess; we need do
nothing, go nowhere, to find something to do;

and our neighbours are congenial, and we find a wide
selection of shops . . . . Here then, without any undue
disturbance, comfortably housed, comfortably off

we live, travelling into the city that is only
thirty miles away (from which traffic and houses queue
stretching almost far enough to reach us

over the same undulating countryside)
to work and from work, morning and evening, in the new
fast clean convenient electric trains. And here

we are happy (though, like everyone else, we have our complaints
about this, about that, problems we'll live to see solved); so who
but somebody who will never be satisfied

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could find any reason at all for not liking
a pleasant little town like this? For though it is true
that you feel a faint but constant constraint, as if

one thoughtless movement could upset everything—some-
thing is holding you down, something is holding you
back, and if you try to pull free it might turn

into a motion more like some slow blind roll over
in bed, that could crush streets of houses and shops and strew
them about like bits of some architect's neat

little model (you're almost afraid to stretch out,
you might bring everything down)—while that's maybe true,
what excuse is that for not liking a town such as ours,
the more he has grown at home here, the more like it he grew?

Peter Redgrove

Plumbers and Postmasters

The noble plumbers, the entitled electricians
Of America, the very decent men
In tan shirts and sharp-creased pants as neatly pressed
And tailored as consultants' swallow-tails;
Their bags full of musical spanners, of steel dogs
That will worry the bolts, tease out the fused contacts;
Their hardhats and boots with steel caps,
And, marching behind, workmen's compensation acts;

Whose hands of leather brush the curls of kids,
Whose leather faces crease into wiring-diagrams;

Once the correct tool is taken from the partitioned box,
Time stops, and turns to a map and sequence
Of folds that fan and smooth
Over the military shoulders of the broad shirt, turning
His fingers in your cellar, deeper than you guess.

The brightly-lit sorting-tables behind him
Over which the white-nailed and sunburnt hands
Pigeon-hole the stiff white letters and brown paper hides,
Another Keaton face, offered letters,
Slides in and out of his chicken-wire hatch,
Bobs over his balances and scales of postage,

On the muscled fingers
His fat diamond ring in which fortunate light is sorted.

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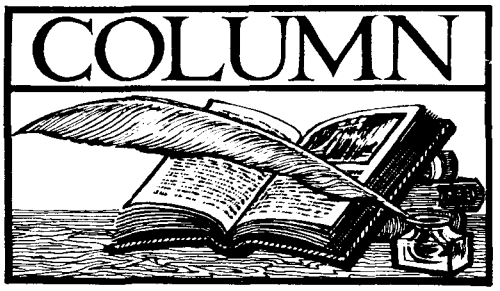

IT SEEMS BY NOW perfectly possible that 1979, China's Year of the Ram, may inaugurate one of the most difficult, precarious, and potentially dangerous periods in super-power relationships since the end of the last World War. Dr Henry Kissinger has been perfectly right to draw attention to the pitfalls that may lie ahead. One can barely foresee even the next twelve months without a certain sense of forewarning and foreboding: it would be tempting the gods to look any further ahead, particularly because by then Mr Carter will already have become involved in his campaign to secure re-election as President of the United States.

One cannot help suspecting that President Carter may be influenced by a sense that perhaps time is running out. The Camp David negotiations; the continued delay in arriving at a SALT II agreement; recognition of the People's Republic of China and all that this implies; the urgent need to achieve a stabilisation of conditions in Iran and the Persian Gulf; the problem of maintaining a consistent and coherent policy to provocative Soviet demonstrations in Europe, Asia, and the Third World—each of these matters is in itself sufficiently complicated to make a successful solution almost unattainable. But taken together, as a global whole, they form an inextricably tangled web of mutually conflicting and contradictory factors, in which each reacts upon the others, so that any degree of success achieved in one field tends to provoke defeat in others. Yet for President Carter it is by now almost essential to achieve some measure of success in foreign policy, for the sake both of his own political future, and, even more important, of the power and prestige of United States foreign policy. It is not a task which any reasonable person would envy him.

IN THE NEW YEAR the President elected to complicate an already almost impossibly complex situation by playing, as they say, "the Chinese card." No one can quite say in what kind of game it is being played; there are certain kinds of games in which it might well turn out to be a joker, with totally unpredictable and untoward events. One would indeed very much like to know whether the pressure to recognise the Chinese People's Republic so suddenly and dramatically, and without prior warning either to the American people, or to America's allies, or to the Soviets, came so urgently from the American or the Chinese side. On the face of it, all the advantages of Mr Carter's bold manoeuvre would appear to be, for the moment at least, on the side of the Chinese.

The Chinese card could in fact prove to be a highly dangerous one, not because of any secret or nefarious motives entertained by any of those taking a hand in the game (though in fact such motives may not be absent) but something far more simple and fundamental: that is to say, the appalling and almost unbridgeable abyss of ignorance which stretches between the Chinese and the other players involved.

I THINK IT WOULD BE TRUE to say that, after all the long, painful and exhausting diplomatic interchanges of the post-War years, a point has been reached when the Soviet Union and the United States and its allies and associates have arrived at a kind of intuitive understanding of just how far they can go with each other. In the end, perhaps, this is all that we mean by *détente*. No doubt there are profound differences in the objective of their policies; no doubt immense risks and dangers may be involved; no doubt the players may sometimes be tempted to raise the odds to a point at which it may be impossible for the game to continue at all. Yet all the same one is inclined to believe that certain limits and rules have been established, based on hard and painfully acquired knowledge and experience, which are sufficient to ensure that after all, the Great Game will go on and will not necessarily end in catastrophe.

The point has not been easy to achieve. It has involved long, tedious, patient and sometimes infinitely procrastinating and devious manoeuvres. It has also involved a vast, concerted effort of learning, study, research and scholarship, so that the players have at their command, if they so wish, a reliable body of knowledge and understanding of each other's manners and morals, their modes of government, their ways of thinking and behaving, and the kind of people they actually are. Much of this knowledge has been spiritually, ethically and intellectually distasteful and antipathetic to those who have been forced to accept it, to such a point that some have felt compelled to say: *Thus far, and no further*, because the moral and political concessions involved have been felt to have become intolerable. Nevertheless, so far it has been possible for the game to continue.

ON THE OTHER HAND, I doubt whether it can continue, at least on the same terms, for much longer now that President Carter has put his

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money so unequivocally on the Chinese card. The elaborate complex of relationships which have been built up between the Soviet Union and the West has so far succeeded in surviving the very obvious reasons for suspicion, mistrust and antipathy which they entertain towards each other. And at least they have helped them to recognise who and what they are, and how much and how little they can expect of each other, and on this basis to achieve an indispensable minimum of mutual understanding. At the least, such a hope has provided the only possible basis for the policy of *détente* with the Soviet Union which, with varying success, the United States has pursued under both President Nixon and President Carter.

Moreover, the degree of understanding, such as it is, which has been achieved between the Soviet Union and the West has not been confined to government and official contacts, or behind the *huis clos* of diplomatic manoeuvre. There has also been genuine growth in knowledge and understanding between the peoples whose lives they govern; or at least this is so on the side of the West, and one would like to think that to some extent also this is true of the Soviet Union. In the West it is by now recognised that the Soviet Union is not merely a highly organised but barbarous machinery of government; it is also a great people and a great nation, of whose life by now we know a great deal, if we choose to make use of the great mass of information available to us.

This is not to say that state and nation are identical. In the Soviet Union, rather, they are largely in conflict, but this only adds precision to the degree of understanding which it is possible to achieve with the Soviet State. To a considerable degree, we do now know what kind of lives the Russians live, how they think and talk to each other and what they talk about, what actually occupies and interests them in their daily lives. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* is not merely a prison-camp memoir; it is also the life of a people. *The Gulag Archipelago* is to a large extent a marvellous anthology of conversations between millions of Russians in which, through sheer force of circumstances, we are privileged to eavesdrop on what Russians actually say to each other when the Soviet Government has exhausted every means of rendering them dumb and mute. *Hope against Hope* is not only the story of how the poet Osip Mandelstam was murdered; it is also the story of the lives, his own and thousands of others, out of which his poetry was created.

THAT SO MUCH OF WHAT WE KNOW about the life of Russia and the Russians comes from such books, and hundreds of others published either clandestinely or outside the frontiers of the Soviet Union, in no way detracts from the quality or veracity of the information which they convey, however hard the Soviet Government may try to suppress it. No doubt that information does not increase our admiration or sympathy for the Soviet régime; but at least it allows us to know where we stand. When we look at Mr Brezhnev today, we can say to ourselves: "We know who you are, and what kind of person you are, and the people you rule and the manner in which you rule them. So if we are to sit down to a hand of cards together, let us at least be quite certain that the rules will be observed. . . ."

BUT CHINA? There is no such common ground on which the West can maintain a genuine and meaningful conversation with the People's Republic of China, much less with the 99.9% of its vast population which is hermetically sealed off from any kind of communication with the outside world. Anyone inclined to doubt such a statement might benefit, as I have done, by reading three recently published books about China by Simon Leys: *Chinese Shadows, Broken Images,* and *The Chairman's New Clothes*.[1] One offers such encouragement with all the more confidence because Mr Leys writes with such elegance and economy that the value of what he has to say is only equalled by the pleasure given in saying it.

The message which these three books convey is essentially a very simple one, which is that the abyss of misunderstanding, or of ignorance, which exists between the West and China today, is as things are an almost unbridgeable chasm. This does far less than justice to the brilliance and wealth of example with which Mr Leys illustrates his argument. And yet perhaps this is hardly necessary, because even a moment's reflection is almost sufficient to convince one of its truth. For to the overwhelming majority of the population of the West what do such phrases as *The Hundred Flowers* signify? or *The Great Leap Forward*? or *The Great Cultural Revolution*? or *The Fall of the Gang of Four*? They read like titles from Sax Rohmer's adventures of Fu-Manchu, and any clues which Western experts and observers contribute to unravelling their plots and complications only succeed in making them more unintelligible. Why should a third-rate actress, with neither artistic nor political talents of any notable kind, suddenly acquire the power (as Mr Leys describes in painful and devastating detail) to inflict almost irreparable damage on the culture and civilisation of China, whether its Imperial past or its revolutionary present? and who knows at the present whether such

[1] *Chinese Shadows*. Viking Press, $10.00. *Broken Images: Essays on Chinese Culture and Politics*. Translated by STEVE COX. Allison & Busby, £6.95. *The Chairman's New Clothes: Mao and the Cultural Revolution*. Translated by C. APPLEYARD and P. GOODE. Allison & Busby, £6.50, paper £2.95.

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damage is indeed past repair or may still be restored? In some respects of course it certainly will not. Though the guide-books will not tell us, we shall never again see the legendary and historic gates of Peking, which were destroyed as almost a minor incident in the vast devastation created by the Great Cultural Revolution. But was this not merely a physical symbol of the devastation and destruction inflicted upon the people of China themselves?

The answer is, of course, that we do not know; and here again we are reminded sharply of the extent and degree of difference between our knowledge of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. For the overwhelming majority of people in the West the history of the People's Republic comprises an incomprehensible jumble of riddles, conundrums, fragments of jig-saw puzzles which refuse to fit into any comprehensible pattern. Indeed, the very titles of Mr Leys' books—*Chinese Shadows, Broken Images*—almost precisely reflect that almost dream-like phantasmagoria which China today presents, as perhaps it always has done, to the consciousness of the West.

Of course, today, we have the benefit of the observations of those who, in increasingly large numbers, now have had the opportunity of seeing and studying China at close quarters, instead of those who have to be content with watching from afar. Yet over five years ago, in ENCOUNTER (November 1973), Paul Hollander warned us, in his article "The Ideological Pilgrim", that we need to be no less wary and suspicious of eye-witness accounts from China than we had long learned to be about those traveller's tales of an Earthly Paradise brought back from the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s; and in this respect one has the feeling that not very much has changed in the intervening years.

SUCH A BACKGROUND of ignorance, illusion and misunderstanding does not provide a very reliable basis for the new initiative in Sino-American relations undertaken by President Carter and dramatically emphasised by the recent nine-day visit to the United States by the Chinese Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Teng Hsiao-p'ing. But we should be grateful that, in one respect at least, the visit has given Mr Teng, who is one of the most powerful of the ruling triumvirate in China today, the opportunity to clear up a dangerous element of confusion in what is at the moment a highly ambiguous and ambivalent situation.

It would appear that President Carter envisages closer relations with China primarily as a policy by which the United States will provide China with the scientific and technological aid and know-how which over the next twenty years will transform the Republic of China into a fully modernised post-industrial state with an economic status and potential equal to that of either the United States or the Soviet Union. Whether sincerely or not, he professes to see no reason why such a policy should interfere with the relationships which have already been established between the Soviet Union and the United States. Indeed, he and his advisers appear to believe that the "China card" in itself provides the basis for a new triangular balance of forces between the three super-powers which would be a powerful and positive contribution to world peace.

Mr Teng, however, has throughout his visit repeatedly and emphatically emphasised that in his view the modernisation of China is only one element of a programme which will enable the People's Republic to become a permanent and effective defence and barrier against "hegemony", the code-word by which the Chinese chose to designate Soviet imperialism and expansionism. From the Chinese point of view, closer cooperation with the United States has no meaning or value unless it enables the People's Republic to advance towards this long-term objective. Indeed, one might hazard the guess that only so important and overriding a goal could, for the Chinese, justify a change in policy which in many respects represents a fundamental deviation from the doctrine which hitherto provided the indispensable framework of China's revolutionary development—the doctrine of China *farà da se*, that China alone and in isolation can succeed in achieving all its objectives in complete independence of other powers and forces by relying solely on its own immense if undeveloped resources, among which its revolutionary spontaneity and resourcefulness are by no means the least.

To many American ears Mr Teng's insistence on the theme of "hegemony" and its dangers may have struck a comforting and reassuring note. To the Soviet Union it has been quite simply a provocation, endangering its long-term relationship with the United States, more particularly if it implies any form of American willingness to aid China in the strengthening of her military or defence capabilities.

Thus "the Chinese card" is capable of presenting a very different appearance, depending on the angle of vision from which it is looked at. It is not difficult to understand the different values and interpretations placed on it by the Russians and the Chinese. It is not easy, however, wholly to share President Carter's confidence that a policy designed to transform China into an economic and technological, as well as a military, super-power need in any way impinge upon America's existing relationships with the Soviet Union. One must simply hope that he knows what he is doing.

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Keynes & the Reconstruction of Liberalism

By Robert Skidelsky

COUPLING THE NAME OF Keynes with a political, rather than an economic, achievement may seem strange to both economists and politicians. Economists will want to claim Keynes as one of their own: and in an important sense they are right. Keynes was an economist by profession. His main intellectual contribution was to the science of economics and economic policy. To the economist *qua* economist this is as far as we need go. Yet from another point of view, which I think was also Keynes's own, his reconstruction of economic science was a means to an end. He saw it, in his own words, "as a contribution to statecraft." It was in conceiving that the economist had such a direct political duty that part of Keynes's greatness lies.

Of course, every practising economist is bound to recognise that his is a science of means, not ends. It teaches us, in Marshall's words, how to realise the "material requisites of well-being." Also economists are, or should be, aware that the satisfaction of material wants has some bearing on the stability of the political and social order.

In the 1930s, the bearing of the economic problem on the question of political and social stability might have seemed particularly obvious. Mass unemployment was a clear threat to the legitimacy of capitalist democracies. Yet it was a problem for which the economics profession was extremely slow to assume responsibility. The reason is that the unemployment problem was widely considered as lying outside the sphere of economic causation.

Classical economics assumed a state of full employment equilibrium, which it looked to politics, and the social order generally, to sustain. Economic breakdowns were attributed by economists not to any flaw in economic reasoning but to political failures to maintain the required conditions. Such a doctrine of course absolved the economics profession from any responsibility for breakdowns in the economic machine, and therefore any responsibility for finding solutions to such breakdowns.

Marxists started from the same premises. To them, too, the source of economic breakdown lay in the social sphere. But they argued that the problem could not be solved within the existing social framework. The capitalist economy was liable to periodic breakdown because it was based on antagonistic class relations. The economic problem would be solved only when production for private profit was abolished. Solving the economic crisis was the responsibility not of the economist but of the proletariat. Both sides, therefore, looked for the solution of the economic problem to changes in the social and/or political sphere, rather than to improvements in economic technique.

KEYNES WAS AT FIRST the *only* professional economist in Britain and the United States who grasped the point that unemployment could be seen as a technical problem in economic analysis to be solved by economic means. He completely understood that by doing so the economist would let the politician, and more generally, capitalist civilisation, off the hook. While other economists waited helplessly for politics to solve the economic problem, Keynes applied himself to equipping economics to solve the political problem. He knew exactly what he was doing. Improvement in economic technique was the only alternative to undesirable political and social change. This, then, is the justification for coupling Keynes's name with a political, rather than an economic, achievement. (Later on I shall point to some of the limitations of that achievement.)

KEYNES'S POLITICAL ACHIEVEMENT can be fully appreciated only against the background of his times. In 1932, Mussolini proclaimed that "all the experiments of our time are anti-liberal." With Hitler on the verge of power in Germany, with Stalin firmly installed in Russia, with Mussolini

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himself celebrating the tenth year of Fascism in Italy, and with the anti-democratic movement on the offensive everywhere, this boast of Mussolini's was, exceptionally, not an empty one.

A full account of the early 20th-century stampede from liberal democracy would need to consider what John Plamenatz has called the "academic attack on democracy" led by Mosca, Pareto, and Michels; the impact on politics and society of the First World War; the fear of the possessing classes that democracy would rob them of their privileges, and of radicals that it would rob them of the revolution; and, no doubt, such phenomena as industrial concentration and the growth of "mass society." The aspect of the stampede which is most relevant to the present discussion is that which derived its justification from the so-called breakdown of capitalism under the impact of the Depression.

Among those who looked beyond temporary War-time dislocations for a cause of breakdown, the most popular general explanation had to do with the erosion of capitalism's "disciplines." The argument went as follows. The working-class movement had been able to win advances in social services and wages which had made large sections of capitalist industry unprofitable: from which followed liquidations and mass unemployment. The argument could be, and was, given an international dimension by adding capitalist rivalries and Third World unrest to the list of forces undermining the expectation of profit.

SUCH EXPLANATIONS as already mentioned were common to both those on the Left and those on the Right. Beatrice Webb, in a chapter of her memoirs, called "The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation", stressed the incompatibility between "profit-making capitalism and political democracy"; between an economic system controlled by a minority in its own interest and a political system which gives workers

> "the . . . power to enforce demands on the national income which capitalism has neither the ability nor the incentive to supply."[1]

On the other side, *laissez-faire* economists like Pareto and Hayek laid stress on the irrationality of the masses, their failure to understand "economic laws"; but this was simply putting a different evaluation on the same thing. Their basic complaint, which for Marxists, of course, was a promise of revolution, was that capitalist industry had been burdened with too many costs, arising out of democratic and trade union pressure, to make possible profitable production in an increasingly competitive world.

However, the political conclusions following from such analysis could take diverse forms. Communism proposed to solve the conflict between capitalism and democracy by abolishing capitalism. Fascism proposed to solve it by abolishing democracy. Most "men of goodwill" shrank from such extreme conclusions. Those on the Left thought capitalism should be subjected to "planning" and income redistribution, but not too much. Those on the Right wanted to reduce trade union power, the social services, and wages, but not by too much. Both shrank from the political implications of tampering too much with either capitalism or democracy. A whole generation of liberals was paralysed by the apparent incompatibility between effective measures for coping with economic distress and the preservation of the various freedoms—economic and political—which they still cherished. This kept them out of the communist and fascist camps; it did not give them a libertarian solution to the Depression. For that an entirely different analysis was needed. This was what Keynes provided. If for the socialist the problem was "Private Ownership", and for the capitalist "Working Class Power", for Keynes it was "Over-Saving"; or more precisely, the excessive propensity to save in relation to private investment opportunities. How did he come to this conclusion?

THIS QUESTION can be answered on many different levels. It was the result, in the first place, of Keynes's prolonged reflection on the actual economic circumstances of his day, particularly those of Britain. The British unemployment problem of the 1920s, he thought, stemmed from an overvalued currency, and this had two consequences. The first was to prevent a "real" transfer of savings abroad, in the form of increased exports; the second was to keep domestic interest rates too high to enable savings to be offset by investment at home. The situation from which Britain suffered could thus be characterised as an excess of voluntary savings over what could be invested abroad with the given state of the foreign balance, or invested at home at the prevailing rate of interest: the consequence of which was unemployment. Britain was admittedly a special case. But with the onset, and persistence, of the world depression, Keynes's economic analysis became much more radical. He now thought there was no natural tendency for an unregulated private enterprise system to attain full employment. Rather he came to think that its normal state was one of under-employment equilibrium. This had to do with "liquidity preference", or the propensity to hoard, i.e., to hold assets in a liquid form. This arose from the technical characteristic of money as a costless store of value, and the inescapable uncertainty surrounding future events. Liquidity preference,

[1] Beatrice Webb, *Our Partnership* (1948), pp. 482, 489.

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Keynes argued, normally prevented the rate of interest (the "reward for not-hoarding") from falling low enough to provide a sufficient "inducement to invest" to keep the economy fully employed.

In the light of history, the 19th century emerged as a "special case", in which the normal weakness of the inducement to invest was offset by special factors: rapid population growth, new inventions, the opening up of new continents, the state of confidence, frequent wars, etc. The doctrine of the classics that the economy tended to full employment equilibrium could thus be defined as a "special case" of a more general theory at the heart of which was the weakness of the inducement to invest. Historical references make it clear that in Keynes's view this had been "at all times the key to the economic problem." For example, he defended (in *The General Theory*) the medieval usury laws on the ground that they had protected the inducement to invest against excessive liquidity-preference; and he endorsed Silvio Gesell's plan for taxing money, so that the holders of it would incur a cost.

ONE POINT IS crucial to stress. In abandoning the full employment assumption Keynes had made a radical breach with classical economics. But its political implication was, as he himself described it, "moderately conservative." For if the economy had no natural or normal tendency to full employment, then all the political and social explanations for its departure from that level lost their force. Unemployment was not caused by antagonistic class relations. It arose from an inevitable tendency towards "oversaving" in a money economy with volatile expectations, uncorrected by government action. The cure lay in a deliberate policy to increase investment and consumption. Keynes offered three main remedies: the stimulation of private investment by concerted efforts to bring down the long-run rate of interest; stimulation of consumption by transferring income from high-saving to high-spending groups; and the use of public investment to fill any shortfall which remained.

ALTHOUGH Keynesian theory was elegant and logical, it would be quite wrong to regard it as an inevitable way of analysing the economic problem of his day. Keynes brought to his reflections on the economic problem his own personal, social, and political values. These, in part, determined the nature of his response, or the way he analysed the situation.

Take, for example, Keynes's identification of unemployment as *the* systemic problem of modern industrial society. This may seem obvious in retrospect; it was less so at the time. Many on the Left regarded unemployment as part of the wider problem of "poverty in the midst of plenty." This analysis led to almost exclusive concentration on redistributionist remedies. Here is the main reason why Hobson and Keynes could never get on terms: they were talking about different problems. With the partial exception of the trade cycle theorists, practically all the discussions on capitalist malfunctioning derived from the 19th century concentrated on the question of the relative shares in the national income enjoyed by the different classes, which in turn was linked to a wider concern with social justice. Keynes was not part of this tradition. At one time or another he suggested various items for inclusion on the "agenda" of politics: social justice, more equal opportunities, did not figure among them.

For Keynes (as Elizabeth Johnson has pointed out) "social injustice consisted only in there not being enough jobs to go round." [2] As he made clear in *The General Theory*, he took the "social structure" as given, "including the forces . . . which determine the distribution of the national income." His attitude was a mixture of aristocratic paternalism, and bourgeois meritocracy. With perhaps his father's example before him he believed that England already offered sufficient opportunities for those with ability and ambition to realise their potential. The only obstacle was lack of sufficient jobs.

THIS VIEW of English society is closely linked to Keynes's political philosophy. Maurice Cranston has pointed out that Keynes stands apart from the "metaphysical" or "New" Liberals who, at the turn of the century, had tried to redefine liberty in terms of moral qualities.[3] He adhered to the "simple Liberalism" of John Locke, grounded in property rights. He wanted individuals to be left with actual, and not just "rational", liberty. He was thus hostile to that line of argument which analysed the economic problem in terms of property relationships; or rather, he defined the economic problem in a way that could be analysed apart from property relationships.

Although Keynes never saw himself as a politician, he had something of the politician's penchant and aptitude for thinking up politically acceptable solutions. In other words, he was interested in policies which could be carried out within the given parameters of political and social

[2] See her "John Maynard Keynes: Scientist or Politician", in *After Keynes*, ed. Joan Robinson (1973), p. 24.

[3] "Keynes; His Political Ideas and their Influence", in *Keynes and Laissez-Faire*, ed. A. P. Thirlwall (1978), pp. 110–111.

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life. Most large-scale schemes of social reform presupposed considerable shifts in social and political power. If existing social and political parameters are taken as given, then, of course, reform does become a matter of improved social technique. For Keynes, intelligence was always the alternative to political and social change.

FINALLY, THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE which Keynes gave in his theory of unemployment to the psychology of expectations reflects not just his interest in the theory of probability, and his experience in the City, but also his complex reaction to the Victorian moral legacy. For Keynes, liquidity-preference (or hoarding) was not simply a rational hedge against future uncertainty, but the result of a social psychology which had elevated the duty of saving, or abstinence, to the status of a supreme virtue, at the expense of the "arts of production as well as those of enjoyment." He recognised the importance of saving for progress, though he thought that its importance even in this respect had been exaggerated; but he rebelled against the psychological price demanded for individual acts of abstention. This comes out strongly in the following passage:

> "When the accumulation of wealth is no longer of high social importance, there will be great changes in the code of morals. We shall be able to rid ourselves of many of the pseudo-moral principles which have hagridden us for two hundred years, by which we have exalted some of the most distasteful of human qualities into the position of the highest virtues. We shall be able to afford to dare to assess the money-motive at its true value. The love of money as a possession—as distinguished from the love of money as a means to the enjoyments and realities of life—will be recognised for what it is, a somewhat disgusting morbidity, one of those semi-criminal semi-pathological propensities which one hands over with a shudder to the specialists in mental disease."[4]

True enough, he warns that the "time for all this is not yet." But it seems clear, from a number of passages such as the above, that for Keynes the main structural flaw running through modern capitalism—the excessive intellectual, psychological, and institutional emphasis it placed on saving—was intimately connected with the Puritan culture about which he felt so ambivalent.

Incidentally (or perhaps not), this is entirely the kind of analysis one might have expected from a member of Bloomsbury and an intimate friend of Lytton Strachey. What was more natural than for Keynes to cap Strachey's own paradoxes: to open up yet another line of attack on the Eminent Victorians by suggesting that the Depression was due not to an excess of vice, but a surfeit of virtue!

WE ARE NOW in a better position to assess the political significance of Keynes's contribution. As we have seen, classical economists and Marxists alike attributed the Depression to working-class pressure on capitalist profits. Prosperity could be restored only by rolling back the working-class movement or by "expropriating the expropriators": in other words, by political and social change which lay outside the sphere of economic policy proper. By arguing that business profits and workers' employment alike were subject to a deflationary tax imposed by "hoarders", Keynes had produced quite a different explanation, making possible a quite different logic of government intervention. Governments were required by his analysis to take steps to increase total output, not to redistribute the proceeds of a given output from one section of the community to another. And because they needed to do the first only, and not the second, the Depression could be overcome by purely economic techniques: by influencing economic behaviour rather than by changing the political and/or social structure.

The one casualty in the Keynesian system was the rentier, or functionless investor. Keynes talked about "the euthanasia of the rentier", but stressed that it would be gradual: gradual enough not to cause anxiety in Bloomsbury. Beyond the necessity of "central controls" to adjust the "propensity to consume and the inducement to invest", Keynes saw no reason to socialise economic life.

Talking about intervention in this way made possible a new politics. First, and most obviously, the Keynesian system avoided having to choose between Capital and Labour. Keeping demand buoyant would underwrite both profits and employment, thus easing the conflict over the distribution of wealth. Secondly, Keynes's view that if demand was right, supply could look after itself—the inversion of Say's Law—undermined the socialist case for central planning and public ownership. It was a choice for indirect and general, as opposed to direct and detailed, economic control.

THE POINT CAN BE PUT somewhat differently: Keynes suggested a way of increasing the public functions of the state without increasing its distributive and coercive functions. This removed one huge defect of collectivist proposals of the 19th-century kind. All such proposals had been associated with the transfer of the ownership and

[4] *Collected Writings*, IX, pp. 329, 331.

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control of industry from private capitalists to the state, suggesting not only prolonged political struggle, but also a permanent expansion in the managerial and executive functions of the state. Keynes's proposals avoided any such abrogation of the private sphere. Management of the economy by government could be reconciled to economic freewill by individuals and groups. These choices reflect Keynes's own political values. His task as he saw it in 1939 was to ensure that "we can act as an organised community for common purposes . . . while respecting and protecting the individual—his freedom of choice, his faith, his mind, and its expression, his enterprise and his property." This aim also comes out strongly in his objection to War-time rationing, a point on which he differed strongly from his friend Richard (now Lord) Kahn:

> "For if the community's aggregate rate of spending can be regulated, the way in which personal incomes are spent and the means by which demand is satisfied can be safely left free and individual. . . . [This is] the only way to avoid the destruction of choice, and initiative, whether by consumers or producers, through the complex tyranny of all-round rationing. This is the one kind of compulsion of which the effect is to enlarge liberty. Those who, entangled in the old unserviceable maxims, fail to see this further-reaching objective have not grasped, to speak American, the big idea." (Letter to *The Times*, 10 April 1940.)

Finally, Keynes's plans express his conviction that freedom can be saved by thought. The authoritarian state systems, he wrote,

> "seek to solve the problem of unemployment at the expense of efficiency and of freedom. It is certain that the world will not much longer tolerate the unemployment which . . . is . . . associated with present day capitalist individualism. But it may be possible *by a right analysis of the problem* to cure the disease whilst preserving efficiency and freedom." (*General Theory*, p. 381, my italics.)

This particular way of combining freedom with control proved irresistible to liberal economists and politicians once they had grasped its point. As Galbraith put it in his *Age of Uncertainty*, looking back on his Harvard days, "Keynes had a solution without a revolution. Our pleasant world could remain; the unemployment and suffering would go. It seemed a miracle . . . ." In Fred Hirsch's words: "To those equally repelled by the politics of Stalin and Hitler, and by the economics of John Strachey's communists and Montagu Norman's bankers alike, the Keynesian middle way came almost as a deliverance: promising full employment and J. S. Mill too . . . ."[5]

THIS ARGUMENT needs amplification. In stressing the political function of Keynesian economics, I don't want to suggest that it was simply an ideology, that its "truth" content was negligible. Keynesianism was not the kind of doctrine described by Pareto whose diffusion "depends hardly at all on its logical value." On the contrary, his economic theory was politically useful precisely *because of* its high logical value; because up to a point, and under certain conditions, it worked in the way it claimed it would. This is why it could develop a wide appeal to both economists and politicians.

Take first its appeal to economists. Keynes was the first to provide an explanation for unemployment in terms of fundamental economic theory. He brought the unemployment problem, so to speak, into economics; made it susceptible to economic analysis, and economic control; and thus gave the economics profession itself a vital and privileged place in the making of policy. In order to win over the economics profession, he had to produce a theory capable of standing professional scrutiny. His theory of unemployment did. It was operational. Its number of variables was small; it could be subjected to the test of results. Above all, it could be applied within the existing political and social structure. These things gave it decisive advantages—as far as the economics profession was concerned—over any rival explanations.[6]

Keynes's technical achievement was also vital in winning *political* acceptance for his theory. It was precisely because Keynes was able to take the unemployment problem out of politics that he was of such use to the politicians. What would politicians give today for an *economic* theory of inflation—one which did not bring in politics and sociology? Perhaps progress consists in precisely this: making technical what was previously political, thus gradually easing the burden on society's peace-keeping mechanisms.

Keynesian economics did not win immediate acceptance as the basis of a new politics. It had to surmount at least three formidable obstacles: and it needed the Second World War to sweep away resistance to making the first fully conscious Keynesian experiments.

IT HAD TO MAKE ITS WAY, first of all, against a considerable amount of residual Puritanism, which, failing to understand Keynesian logic, viewed with

[5] Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth* (1977), p. 126.

[6] For a more extended discussion of Keynes's appeal to economists, see Harry G. Johnson, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Economics", ENCOUNTER (April 1971).

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horror the prospect of governments "living beyond their means" by running budget deficits, and countries "living beyond their means" by letting the exchange (in Sir Otto Niemeyer's graphic words) "go hang." This attitude comes out clearly in a remark by Sir James Grigg (Principal Private Secretary to four Chancellors of the Exchequer, including Winston Churchill):

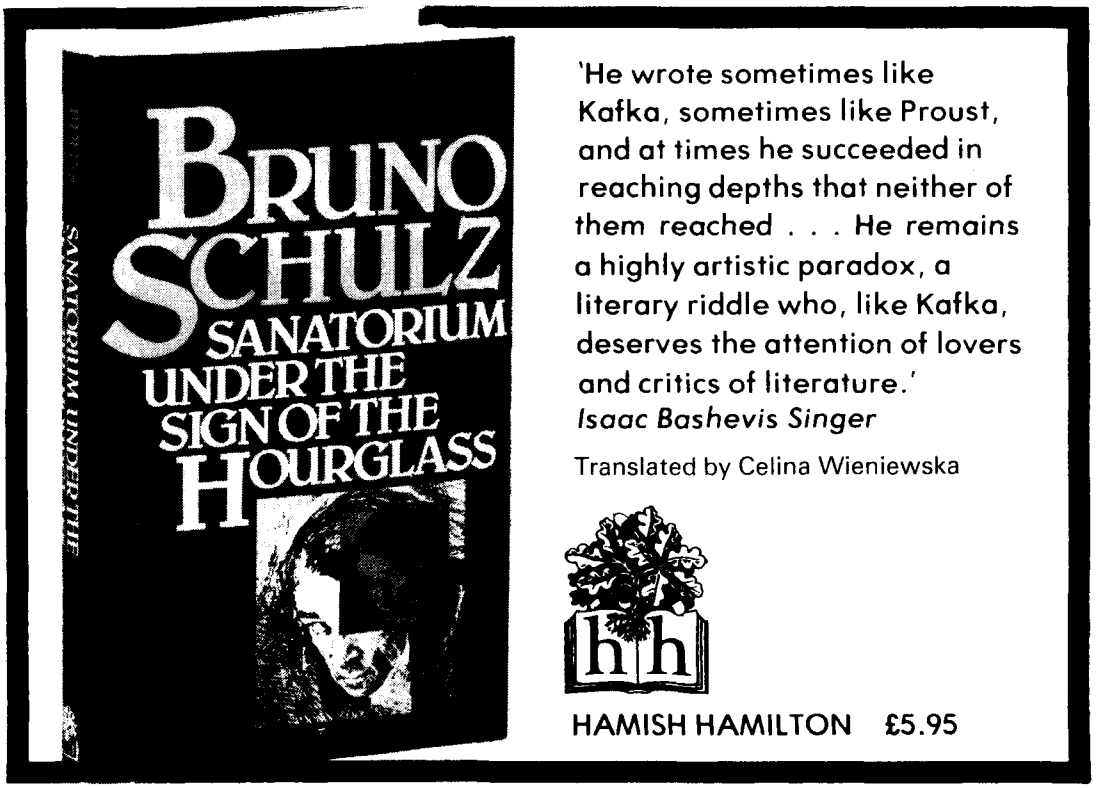
> "... I distrust utterly those economists who have with great but deplorable ingenuity taught that it is not only possible but praiseworthy for a whole country to live beyond its means on its wits ... who teach that it is possible to make a community rich by calling a penny two pence, in short who have sought to make economics into a *vade mecum* for political spivs." [7]

In other words, Keynesian economics was widely viewed as an aid to political dishonesty.

Secondly, it had to make its way against rival panaceas, particularly socialism, which laid chief emphasis on public ownership and the redistribution of wealth. Before it could become the basis of a new politics, socialists (at least of the non-Marxist persuasion) had to be convinced that Keynesian economics could be made to work for, or in conjunction with, social democratic objectives. During the Depression, Keynesian proposals in Britain were clearly seen as competitive with socialism by all except a handful of Labour politicians such as Sir Oswald Mosley and Ernest Bevin. It was not till the later 1930s that a reconciliation took place between Keynesian and Social Democratic thought.

Thirdly, Keynesian proposals had to be formulated in such a way as to be acceptable to conservative opinion. Keynes wrote scathingly that "the capitalist leaders in the City and in Parliament are incapable of distinguishing novel measures for safeguarding Capitalism from what they call Bolshevism...."[8] But this ignores the fact that early Keynesian schemes did raise important political issues. For example, Keynesianism first entered American political life as a radical creed. The economic manifesto of 7 Keynesian Harvard and Tufts economists, published in October 1938, urged a "vigorous expansion of the public sector of the economy, sharp increases in the progression of the tax system, indefinite increases in the public debt, enlargement of old-age benefits, assistance programmes for health and education, and massive commitments to housing and urban development...."[9] Not the kind of programme likely to recommend itself to American business! In his book *The Fiscal Revolution in America*, Herbert Stein has shown that it was only when Key-

[7] P. J. Grigg, *Prejudice and Judgement* (1948), p. 7.
[8] J. M. Keynes, *Essays in Persuasion* (1931), p. 299.
[9] Robert Lekachman, *The Age of Keynes* (1969 ed.), p. 132.


BRUNO SCHULZ
SANATORIUM UNDER THE SIGN OF THE HOURGLASS
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nesian remedies for depression took the form of tax cuts that they could become more generally acceptable. For the "new economics", as it was known, could then be married to one of the constants of business thinking—tax reductions—while simultaneously winning the support of labour. In Britain, too, Keynesian policy had to be emancipated from massive public works of the Lloyd George or Mosley type before it could become politically acceptable. Policy measures, in other words, had to be considerably refined and smoothed before Keynesian economics could become politically usable.

ALTHOUGH AN IMPORTANT REASON why the Keynesian remedy for Depression triumphed over alternatives was that it was the most economical of political and social change, it nevertheless took another World War to start the Keynesian experiment. The War was particularly important in creating the right psychological atmosphere; it brought the classes together in a spirit of War-time unity, thus creating the disposition to search for a creed capable of giving some permanent expression to that moment of exaltation. Secondly, Keynesianism answered the immediate needs of War-time finance: in retrospect it is somewhat ironic to recall that it won its spurs as a successful anti-inflationary technique. Thirdly, the War, in producing a public sector large enough to act as economic controller, created structural conditions for a sophisticated and therefore politically acceptable Keynesianism which had not existed before. The association of infant Keynesianism with a war economy is very important, many of the assumptions of the Keynesians about what could be done in a democracy deriving from this rather special period. For example, the War had eliminated, or greatly minimised, both budgetary politics and class conflict, since there existed a clear order of priorities imposed by the war itself.

Keynesians tended to think that these conditions would continue forever. In this they were wrong.

IN RECENT YEARS, attention has come to focus on the limitation, rather than on the success, of Keynes's political achievement. The promised economic results are no longer being secured. "Present economic conditions", notes a recent report of OECD experts, "are obviously abnormal in terms of capacity utilisation, inflation, and international payments equilibrium. . . ."[10] Some would argue that these things are the result of avoidable errors in economic policy; but this does not go to the heart of the matter.

The bunching together of these "abnormalities" suggests, rather, a systemic dysfunction in the system of managed capitalism which Keynesian policy has so far been able to contain, but not cure. This disturbance arises both from within nations, and from the relations between nations. The result has been an alteration in the institutional framework in which Keynesian policy has hitherto been applied. This has affected its ability to do the political work which it promised—to keep liberal capitalism going.

The belief that Keynesian policy would be able to provide satisfactory economic (and therefore political) results rested on three assumptions about the institutional framework of economic policy-making. The first was that "demand management" could be insulated from political pressures. The second was that there would be enough of a market system, or alternatively, social cohesion, for demand-management to work in the way it claimed it would. The third assumption was that the international system would be such that all countries could benefit from the international division of labour. These assumptions have been becoming steadily less valid.

Galbraith's chapter on Keynes in his book *The Age of Uncertainty* is headed "The Mandarin Revolution." This implies Keynes's most characteristic belief: that public affairs should and could be managed by an élite of clever and disinterested public servants. The quarrel between Keynes and the Treasury in the 1920s was not about who should *do* the governing—they were both equally suspicious of democracy—but about the role of fixed rules. Keynes's thought was essentially discretionary: the idea of going by fixed rules, such as the Gold Standard rule, or the Balanced Budget rule, was foreign to his temperament. Human intelligence must be freed to find rational solutions to problems; and these solutions must be adjusted to frequently changing circumstances. The traditional economic managers were more pessimistic, both about the supply of adequate intelligence, and about its ability to withstand popular pressures. Only universal commitment to some fixed rules would keep political competition out of economic life.

Keynes's own expectations come out clearly in the debate on the return to the gold standard in the 1920s. In the opinion of the Cunliffe Report, the gold standard system provided rules of conduct sufficient to render it politician-proof. Only when the gold reserves went up could the note issue be expanded; when they went down, the quantity of money had to go down as well. The system, in short, imposed an automatic check on any tendency to inflation. When Keynes, in its place,

[10] Paul McCracken and others, *Towards Full Employment and Stability* (A Report to the OECD by a group of independent experts, June 1977), p. 11.

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advocated a "managed" currency, the Treasury asked him pertinently how he proposed to prevent inflation. Sir Roy Harrod rightly remarks, "Keynes deemed England a sufficiently mature country for it to be possible to assume that the authorities . . . would not indulge in an orgy of feckless note issue."[11] He assumed, in short, that economic decision-making could be insulated from political pressures.

THE BASIS OF THE ASSUMPTION was twofold. Keynes's models of economic management were provided by two remarkably "Mandarin" institutions: the Treasury and the Bank of England. And he assumed, without perhaps thinking much about it, that his class (the "educated bourgeoisie" as he called them) would continue to dominate; that the forces of deference which had sustained aristocratic government would sustain the authority of the expert, or at least provide the expert with the political space to do his work. What he did not foresee was the twin effects on a competitive political system of the decline in class authority, and the "revolution of rising expectations." In place of Keynes's oligarchic system of democracy, modern political analysts have given us a picture of a highly competitive vote-buying system in which politicians can win power only by promising more than the economy can deliver, and keep power only by honouring their promises through recourse to the printing of money. It is competition for the votes of such an electorate which creates structural excess demand in the economy: hence one root of inflation.

IT IS WORTH RECALLING two of Schumpeter's conditions for the successful working of democracy. One was that some matters be deliberately excluded from becoming "part of the material of the competitive struggle for political leadership." Another was that parliaments and electorates "must be on an intellectual and moral level high enough to be proof against the offerings of the crook and the crank. . . ."[12] One could argue that such conditions are no longer met.

The second Keynesian assumption concerns not the rationality of demand-management, but the kind of environment in which full employment policies could be applied without inflationary consequences. The standard economic model does assume, I think, a market system in which the price of labour, like that of any other commodity, is fixed

[11] Sir Roy Harrod, *Life of John Maynard Keynes* (1951), p. 345.

[12] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, Allen & Unwin, 13th impression, 1978, pp. 293–294.

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by the demand for it. Assuming, then, that there is no political compulsion to run the economy at excess demand, and that demand-management is sufficiently intelligent not to bring the economy sharply up against supply bottlenecks, there should be no tendency to systemic inflation. For example, as late as 1971 Sir Eric Roll could talk of Keynesian theory as a "general theory of economic stabilisation . . . applicable in all circumstances and capable of yielding policy guidance for the avoidance of either of the two evils, unemployment or inflation."[13]

How far Keynes (or his closest followers) accepted this is open to question. Keynes did foresee a *political* problem of inflation at full employment owing to the strength of the trade unions. But the War-time experience made possible an alternative hypothesis which was equally satisfactory: the social consensus which War had created would induce voluntary restraint on both sides of industry. The game, as Keynes put it, could be played for lower stakes. It is the simultaneous collapse of both hypotheses (especially in Britain) which has so radically altered the environment of demand-management.

THE GROWTH OF working-class control over the determination of money-wages can be analysed in a number of different ways.

Attention can be drawn to the growth of monopoly in the supply of labour through greater unionisation, the related growth of industry-wide bargaining, guaranteed full employment, social security benefits, and the technological interdependence which enables small groups of workers to "hold the community to ransom." Or we can concentrate on changes in social attitudes: the so-called "revolution of rising expectations" which demands constant wage increases irrespective of productivity gains; the erosion of the Work Ethic; the breakdown of deference (not least towards collaborationist trade union leaders); the decline of patriotism (a point particularly stressed by E. J. Mishan); the growth of egalitarian sentiment; alienation; and so on. Or we can draw attention to the wage bargaining process itself. Each group of workers seeks to defend its relative position. Thus "changes in the money-wage of one particular group . . . could trigger off a leap-frogging type of wage spiral."[14] Exogenous increases in the cost of living, whether produced by "excess demand" or rising import prices, could have the same effect if the expectation was that a particular group of workers would try to maintain its real wage in the changed circumstances. Central to this type of analysis is the view that relative wage rates are fixed not by market bargains but by history. Workers will resist any changes in their relative positions.

It is the erosion of a genuine market for labour, coupled with the breakdown of working-class "restraint", that has prompted British and other Western governments to start experimenting with pay policies. These have often been seen as natural extensions of Keynesian "politics." I think this is wrong. From the point of view of Keynesian theory it does not matter whether Keynesianism is applied through economic manipulation or political controls. But this ignores the political purpose and function of Keynesian ideas. Keynesian management became generally acceptable because it was manipulative, not coercive. If Keynesianism moves to coercion it loses its basic political function, its ability to provide consensus; or more precisely, to obviate the need for consensus.

Authoritarian Keynesians become planners; libertarian Keynesians become free marketeers. The basic conflict which post-War Keynesian management seemed to have transcended returns again, as Planning and Freedom stand once more opposed. And this is now starting to happen.

FINALLY, KEYNES'S HOPE for a liberal system of politics at home depended crucially on the existence of a liberal environment abroad. Without international liberalism it would be very difficult to preserve domestic liberalism. National economies would become fortresses, bristling with defences, much as they had been between the Wars.

THE KEY QUESTION which Keynes had to face concerned the conditions of international economic order. Marxists blamed the inter-War breakdown on deep-seated structural factors. The clash between rival imperialisms, and between the metropolis and the periphery, over the distribution of the world's resources made impossible a stable capitalist order. Keynes, rather, analysed the problem by the same methods he had used to explain domestic unemployment. The breakdown of the pre-1914 system had been due to American and French "oversaving." By stockpiling gold, the two countries had imposed deflation on the rest of the world, causing the collapse of the free-trade/gold-standard system. In principle, this could be remedied by improvements in the technique of international monetary management. If gold could be demonetised, or other measures taken for

[13] Sir Eric Roll, *The Uses and Abuses of Economics* (1978), pp. 34–5.

[14] Deepak Lal, *Unemployment and Wage Inflation in Industrial Economics* (OECD, 1977), p. 33. This is also Lord Kahn's view, "On Re-reading Keynes", (British Academy, 1974), p. 30.

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increasing international liquidity, then enough world demand could be generated to keep all nations at full employment, provided they pursued appropriate domestic policies.

However, although Keynes rejected the Marxist idea of an inevitable international antagonism under capitalism, he could not take for granted the existence of an appropriate institutional framework for realising his international design, as he could at home. As Kindleberger has pointed out, an international economy is harmonised not by free trade and capital movements, as in classical theory, but by the ability and willingness of a leading power to "underwrite" it. This underwriting, or leadership, consists of four elements: maintaining an open market for imports, providing counter-cyclical lending, coordinating macro-economic policies, and discounting in crisis.[15] Before 1914, Britain had performed these functions, and the system had worked. Between the Wars, no single country was able to do so. The spread of industrialisation, nationalism, and imperialism in the last years of the 19th century as well as the dislocation of production and trade patterns through the war, had created a state of international disorder in which no single power was able to take control. In other words, although the problem was susceptible to economic analysis, the cure lay in the power/political sphere—in the recreation of a system of international authority. It took a second World War to accomplish this: to establish undisputed American leadership over the capitalist world and thus make possible the application of Keynesian ideas on a world scale.

Since 1971, the American-dominated arrangements established in the 1940s have broken down; monetary disorder has become acute. This breakdown of the conditions for harmonious interdependence has crucial repercussions on the viability of domestic Keynesian politics, especially in relatively uncompetitive countries like Britain. We can no longer rely on a continuous increase in world demand to safeguard our incomes and jobs; while measures to protect these by purely national policy run the risk of eroding our competitive position still further. The breakdown of what one may call "world Keynesianism" interacts with the growing crisis of domestic Keynesian management to threaten the whole economic basis of post-War liberalism.

TO SUMMARISE: many thoughtful pre-Keynesians attributed the inter-War crisis to the class struggle. The extreme Left wanted to resolve it by abolishing capitalism; the extreme right, by abolishing the democratic movement. Liberals who saw both capitalism and democracy as bulwarks of liberty shrank from extreme solutions, but had none of their own. Keynes suggested a different way of analysing the problem. He attributed the crisis to "over-saving" and under-investment. By showing how to remedy it by fiscal and monetary measures alone, he suggested a way of restoring profitability and full employment without sacrificing economic or political freedoms. That is why the Keynesian system could become the basis of a new politics. Today, this system is in decay, unable to overcome "slumpflation", domestic and international.

Once more, many Marxist and non-Marxist economists find themselves in diagnostic alliance. A further shift in class power away from capitalism and imperialism is making capitalism unprofitable and therefore unworkable. For example, one Marxist writer has written of "the fundamental decline in profitability which occurred in several countries in the 1970s, itself a reflection of growing labour strength at a time of heightened international competition"[16]—a thought which is certainly present in the minds of many capitalist spokesmen. So one side looks once more to the working class to abolish capitalism; and the other looks to the state to limit working-class power. In between stand the "men of goodwill" who hope for miracles of international cooperation to pull us through, much as Ramsay MacDonald did in 1933.

Keynesian economics made possible the reconstruction of liberal politics. Today the decline in Keynesian economics endangers that political achievement. After thirty or so years of Keynesianism we return to the original question. Can we look once more to an improvement in economic technique to solve the political problem? Or must we rely on political and social change to solve the economic problem?

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[15] Charles Kindleberger, "Systems of International Organization", in David P. Calleo and others, *Money and the Coming World Order*, (1976), p. 32.

[16] Ian Gough, "State Expenditure in Advanced Capitalism", *New Left Review* (July–August 1975), p. 87.

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Rome

INFALLIBILITY: Pope John Paul II yesterday tossed a child into the air, held his ears against deafening applause, and had trouble with an Italian word—all much to the delight of huge crowds at the Polish Pontiff's weekly general audience.

Addressing the people in the audience hall the Pope stumbled over the long Italian word contemporaneamente **(simultaneous). The crowd laughed and the Pope told them: "I see everyone is happy when the Pope makes a mistake." He then slowly repeated the word.**

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Birmingham

PIT LANGUAGE: *Shopgirl Amanda Rigby's bad language was so fruity that she had to be sacked, her boss said yesterday. She told customers at the ladies' shoe shop to "—— off" and often used four-letter words, manageress Mrs Elizabeth Moulton told Birmingham Industrial Tribunal.*

She also used a Colonel Bogey eight-letter word for part of a man's body, Mrs Moulton claimed.

But when Mrs Moulton described Amanda's swearing as "pit language" she was told to watch her words by Tribunal member Ted Lindop. Mr Lindop, a miner for 23 years, asked: "Have you ever worked down a pit? What right have you got to determine what is the kind of language used down a pit?" Mrs Moulton told him: "It was bad language. I probably used the wrong term."

Amanda, of Cross Heath, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs, said: "I only said things like damn and bloody. I may have muttered '—— off' after an awkward customer had left the store."

The Tribunal decided that Amanda's dismissal was unfair. But the members agreed she was half to blame and reduced her compensation to £170.

Tribunal chairman Mr Donald Rigbey said: "I swear and I dare say everyone in this room swears from time to time."

After the hearing Mr Lindop said: "I have heard worse language since I left the pits than I ever did when I was down them."

THE SUN

Normanton, Derby

NAKED TRUTH: *An anonymous clergyman was annoyed when no one answered his knock at the door of a house, reports the parish magazine at Normanton, Derby. He left his visiting card, writing on it:*

"Revelation 3, 20. Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door I will come to him."

The next Sunday a woman attended church service and gave the vicar her card inscribed: "Genesis 3: 10." The vicar looked it up and read:

"I heard the sound of thee in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked and hid myself."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

FATHER PAGAN: *A London newspaper asked readers "What odd names have given you a laugh?" One reader of The Sun wrote:*

"My girlfriend seemed in too much of a hurry to get married. She was only interested in getting rid of her surname, Trollope. Three years later I met her again. She had become Mrs Freebody."

Another said:

"In my Yorkshire village, the name of the local midwife was Mrs. Tugwell."

One correspondent reported spotted donkeys grazing in a field under a sign that said the property belonged to E. Haw & Sons. Another wrote from the West Midlands that in the suburb of Shirley, there was an Indian restaurant called the Shirley Temple.

One reader wrote from the county of Hants: "I know a man with the most inappropriate name of Pagan. He's a priest."

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Westminster

METAPHORIA: *In conclusion, Prime Minister Callaghan promised the House of Commons with appropriate fervour that, on general wages policy, he would "hammer the message home while building bridges."*

Aha, Ramsay MacDonald lives! Will Mr Callaghan invite us next to leave no stone unturned while steering for calmer waters"?

DAILY MAIL

London

TIME OUT: *Time Magazine continues to treat English literature with baffling disrespect.*

Last year it ran a promotion advertisement which misquoted Disraeli's "Sybil":

"To be conscious that you are ignorant *of the facts* **is a great step to knowledge."**

The phrase which I have italicised does not appear in the original, and only weakens the sentiment. After I had corresponded with Time *about this, the advertisement was dropped. Now a new one has appeared. Dr Johnson is quoted as saying:*

"Knowledge is of two kinds; we know a subject ourselves or we know where we can get information upon it."

The verb which (according to Boswell) Dr Johnson actually used on April 18, 1775, was not the pallid "get", but the more robust and precise "find."

I predict a prosperous future for the perpetrator of these solecisms: helping our Bishops to destroy the Prayer Book.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

London

IMITATING TV: Detectives disguised as delivery men, factory workers and furniture removers arrested three armed raiders at a factory estate yesterday. The gang appeared just as a security van was due to deliver wages. The detectives appeared with guns drawn to face the gang who had pistols and knives. The raiders stood stunned as the detectives shouted: "Freeze!" The police said: "It was just like people see on the television."

THE TIMES

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NOTES & TOPICS

Dr Owen & Beyond

Britain & Europe

By Lord Gladwyn

"THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S view of the Community is not the perspective of an outsider looking in, but a view from inside the Community looking forward" says the Foreign Secretary in his important contribution to the December issue of ENCOUNTER. This is hardly the view of some members of the Cabinet, or of a large section of the British people. On the major issue—whether we are to belong to an emerging political entity in which part of the "sovereignty" of all Members will be gradually shared or "pooled"—both the major parties are divided. With us, as in France where the Gaullists are siding with the Communists in a sort of anti-Community frenzy, there are those who broadly speaking accept this thesis, and those who, ranging from Tony Benn to Enoch Powell, most emphatically do not. Nor is it exactly the "perspective" which our partners in the EEC believe has guided Her Majesty's Government in its dealings with them since 1974.

In the 1975 referendum the British people agreed by a two-to-one majority to accept the Treaty of Rome including all the rules and regulations so far accepted by the Six, subject only to some financial adjustments and the so-called "Luxembourg Compromise" on majority voting. Since then the world recession and the five-fold increase in the price of oil have persuaded many of them that the 33% who voted "*No*" were probably right, and that, even if we should not actually withdraw, we should insist on the maintenance of full national independence and on the rejection of any compromise which might unfavourably affect any section, however small, of our own community.

Dr David Owen makes another preliminary point on which his subsequent argument largely rests.

> "The British Government does not see the Community developing as a Federation [or even, necessarily, as a Confederation. It is rather] an unprecedented venture by a unique grouping of nations . . . likely to evolve in ways entirely without precedent."

This is precisely what I have been saying ever since Roy Jenkins and I started up "The Campaign for the Common Market" in 1961. All history surely stands in the way of anything like the American Union emerging in Western Europe. Federalists deny this, and they may be right. But they are certainly not in a majority in this country, still less in France.

BUT, IF SO, what sort of entity *do* we contemplate? Dr Owen avoids this question. "We find it difficult to commit ourselves to a formula"; "grand designs do not appeal" to us. On the strength of this assertion he proceeds with his main argument—elegantly developed—that "pragmatism", dear to the heart of Mr James Callaghan, is the only possible philosophy to light us on the way ahead.

Thus we must first of all "find the right level of decision-making", although not *every* problem should be put to the Community for solution, since some are "simply impracticable in present conditions." We must also "be suspicious of all bureaucracies", notably the Brussels Commission, though of course the Commission, a non-elected and thus a non-representative body, can hardly be blamed for recommending solutions that are probably "impracticable."

True, "a given Community policy", should not be opposed purely "because it will be difficult or will impose extra financial costs." But only when there is complete consensus can a policy actually be adopted. "Automatic" majority voting is thus "a blind alley along which we would be unwise to venture", even if such voting can, if informally adopted, sometimes lead to consensus. In sum, the national interests of the various partners *do* differ materially, and any reconciling of them must be a matter of hard and protracted negotiation. It follows that "the Community's working machinery is an area of great sensitivity to us", as it is to the French and the Danes—perhaps to others too. In all this there is obviously a considerable element of truth.

So there is, of course, in Dr Owen's contention that the Common Agricultural Policy must be so adapted as to conform more happily with the interests of consumers and of the Community as a whole, avoiding expensive surpluses and undue subsidising of larger and richer farmers. Nor does he exclude the possibility of the gradual achievement of a Common Energy Policy. All this can be done, he believes, if we meet our "greatest challenge": "arresting present trends of divergence between the economies of Member States" and perhaps giving Finance Ministers more control over the annual price-fixing process, thus avoiding a "crude national haggle among Agricultural Ministers"—though he does not say, as he well might, that if (for instance) the haggle among those

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Ministers over fishing policy had been attended by the Foreign Ministers we could have reached a perfectly acceptable compromise on fishing years ago! Nor does he add that one of the best ways of "arresting divergence" would be for this country to work rather harder and more efficiently than we have done since the War.

STILL, EUROPEANS need not quarrel overmuch with the Foreign Secretary's approach so far as it goes. He is clearly animated by good will and determined, if he can, to make the Community work. But can "pragmatism" alone really function? Will not intensive, prolonged and often unproductive bargaining in the Council of Ministers be too slow, in the absence of certain acknowledged and applied disciplines, to avoid a gradual collapse of the Community as feared by the German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt? If the European Monetary System is going to work—and work it must if the EEC is to endure—there must at some stage be considerable pooling of resources (much more than has presumably recently taken place, in order to get Italy and Ireland in). If we are to benefit from such a redistribution, we shall have to meet our partners' wishes in various other fields, such as energy, and give some proof of a willingness to compromise which has so far been hardly discernible in our vigorously nationalistic stance.

Some may think that, surrounded by national bureaucrats intent on protecting the immediate interests of their Nation and their Ministries, and faced by a suspicious Parliament concerned to see that its "sovereignty" is in no way prejudiced, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary will be able to do no such thing. Or possibly the Prime Minister may occasionally see the light in high-level talks with his co-equals in the European Council, but then find that he cannot get his Parliament, or even his own colleagues, to agree. And the same may naturally apply to the leaders of other Member States.

EVENTS ARE LIKELY to move quickly in the next few years. Perhaps under the impulsion of some external shock—failure of American will to lead the "free world", a sinister move by the Soviet Union, a threat to Community supplies of oil, or an acute worsening of the world recession—the desirable degree of unity among the West European democracies may be achieved by generally apprehended fear. It is equally possible that such events may, in the continued absence of an accepted political system, result in the disruption of the Community. "Pragmatism" is not in itself very likely to prevent the emergence in such distressing circumstances of a neutralist Italy, or even a violently nationalistic France. Only an agreed and functioning system would have much chance of standing up in the face of disasters—and that means a system in which vital decisions can be taken without paralysing delays.

It is no good thinking—and here Dr Owen is quite right—that major decisions can be taken elsewhere than in the Council of Ministers which, for as far as we can now see, is going to be the nearest thing to a "government" that the EEC is likely to get. In that Council no Minister can, in the last resort, be compelled to do anything that he or she does not want to do. And, so long as no "Union" has been achieved, it will remain possible for any Member to withdraw peacefully from the Community if a Parliament so desires. How, then, can we imagine that some "system" will gradually evolve that will be likely to result in the great decisions, the great compromises? Here I part company with Dr Owen and his "pragmatism only" concept of the future, and move in a direction which he seems to ignore, or to dismiss with a certain contempt. I refer to the coming directly elected European Parliament.

"SOME PEOPLE", says the Foreign Secretary, "believe that direct elections to the Assembly ... will greatly strengthen the democratic voice in the Community." But his own view is "that the impact of direct elections has been greatly exaggerated" and in any case, "great care will be needed to avoid isolating [the European] from the national Parliaments. Anyhow, it is essential that the Assembly work *with* the Council ... rather than setting itself up as a rival." Yet we read a little further on that

> "The British objective is to maintain and develop *Community institutions* [italics added] which are ... responsive to democratic influence.... Democratic control is ... a vital contribution to its growth."

There seems to be contradiction here; but it is clear that the Foreign Secretary does not believe that the directly-elected Parliament will contribute much to the process of Western European unification for many years to come. It must leave all that to the "pragmatic" Ministers, and try not to embarrass them, still less get in their way.

The relationship between the directly-elected European Parliament and the national Parliament in Westminster has recently been examined by a House of Lords Committee (of which I was a member), presided over by Lord Greenwood of Rossendale. It took evidence from a great number of people, mostly politicians, and travelled to Strasbourg to interview all concerned with the existing European Assembly. Its conclusions are of very considerable interest. Most of those who gave

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evidence seemed to think that, though it would have limited formal powers, which could not be increased without the consent of nine Parliaments, it was likely to exert very considerable influence. Indeed it was the more extreme anti-Europeans—i.e. those who actually wanted us to withdraw from the Community—who were the most persuaded that such might be the case.

ONCE IN STRASBOURG for five years, a directly-elected person, whatever his Party or his Nation, will come to regard the great problems under discussion from a *European*, not simply from a *national* point of view. The Parliament will therefore be a body essentially different from the Council of Ministers who *must* regard their problems primarily from a national standpoint. This does not mean that Members of the European Parliament will become "de-nationalised" or converted to any political philosophy other than that on the basis of which they were elected. But they will necessarily be more impressed by the advantages of great compromises worked out in the various Committees and possibly adopted by a majority in the Plenary than their national colleagues, who will be unaware of the detailed discussions resulting in the formulation of some "European" case.

Debates in the Committees of the European Parliament will invariably be attended by high-ranking members of the European Commission who, for the most part, are not "bureaucrats" by training or inclination, but intelligent and usually successful ex-politicians or businessmen. When the Parliament passes a Resolution on some important subject, the chances are that it will be accepted by the Commission and eventually submitted to the Council of Ministers who as things are as often as not just put it to one side. But if such a Resolution is passed in the new directly-elected Parliament by a substantial majority it will be European public opinion that is being voiced. With the powerful support of the Commission, it will have to be taken seriously by the Ministers. Any government in a minority in opposing it will probably have to reckon with indignant "MEPs" who will come back and make speeches in their constituencies seeking support from the local members of their party and hence attacking the government from the rear. So resolutions passed by (say) a two-thirds majority in the Parliament may well, after debate, normally be accepted by the Council of Ministers.

Certainly a recalcitrant government will, at least for some years, be able to resist such pressure if its majority holds. Nor is it necessary to suppose that this would result in a clash between the one Parliament and the other. For the national Parliament is likely to be divided, and the views of an MEP may

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well be acceptable to one or more of the local MPs. Ways and means whereby contact can best be maintained between the two Parliaments are examined in the House of Lords Report. In particular, the "*Rapporteur*" of any draft Resolution under discussion in the European Parliament could be asked to discuss it with the Westminster Scrutiny Committee—preferably a joint House of Commons/House of Lords Committee—which will investigate the matter and whose report will no doubt influence the government. There might also be a "Grand Committee" of both Houses in which MEPs would occasionally debate great issues in a general way.

By such a process the new "entity" desired in principle by many Ministers (including, no doubt Dr Owen himself) will, with luck, emerge and become workable. If it does, it will certainly not resemble any other Union which has so far been achieved. The existing institutions of the Community are not comparable to any other, but they are perfectly capable of functioning as a whole if some democratic impetus is forthcoming. It will be the duty—and, I believe, the destiny—of the new Parliament to give that necessary push.

Naturally it will be some time before it can operate in this way. The first year or two may be largely taken up in settling such mundane but important things as pay; the future single site, the rules of procedure, the organisation of the political groups, etc. And there is always a danger that suspicions on the part of the national governments—together with intensive propaganda by groups hostile to the whole cause of European unity, to say nothing of the difficulties inherent in enlargement before the new system is seen to be viable and therefore is accepted—may cause it to run into the sands.

Most people in this country will however probably agree that, whatever the government may have to say for the purpose of combating anti-European propaganda, pragmatism is really not enough. Reversion to economic nationalism would so obviously be against the best interests of all the Western European democracies—who would, in that event, scarcely survive as democracies—that it can be hoped that reason will prevail. It was, I think, the great Swedish Chancellor Oxenstierna who said that the older he grew the more he was impressed by the paucity of wisdom with which the world was governed. But sometimes the force of events prevails over the short-sightedness of man.

International Commentary

Into a Dangerous Decade

China, SALT & the 1980s—By ALUN CHALFONT

THOSE IN THE WEST who persistently savaged the Shah of Iran and acted as public relations officers for his most violently fanatical opponents are now able to contemplate, undoubtedly with some satisfaction, the state of affairs in Tehran. An aged religious reactionary with an emotional appeal to millions of Persians—many of them still illiterate—is at the head of a precarious administration already under threat from the extreme Left which helped him to destroy the government of the Shah; and a series of barbaric executions is systematically eliminating the leadership of the security forces. Civil war, social disintegration, and economic disaster seem inevitable, and a country which, in spite of all its faults, inequalities, and injustices, was a few months ago struggling towards industrial prosperity now faces a precipitate return to Third World poverty.

Quite apart from its implications for the Persian people themselves, this transformation will have a profound and far-reaching impact on the global balance of power, and ultimately on the prosperity and security of the West. Already the cancellation of large arms contracts has begun to establish the pattern. Iran is no longer to be a well-armed and stable ally of the West; it is more likely to be, as Khrushchev once described it, a rotten apple ready to fall when the Soviet Union is ready to shake the tree. Quite apart from the immediately obvious significance of this—the potential threat to essential oil supplies and (in case it had escaped the notice of some of our own fun-revolutionaries) the inevitable effects upon levels of employment and standards of living in the West—there are long-term implications of a much more serious kind.

The strategic point of balance in the Middle East

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is undergoing a decisive shift. With Afghanistan already in the Russian sphere of influence, the removal of the Iranian factor from the western side of the power equation will necessitate a radical reassessment of American and West European foreign policies in the Middle East. Egypt and Saudi Arabia will begin to assume a much greater importance and the Israel-Arab confrontation will inevitably have to be regarded in a new light. Yet, as in the case of Soviet penetration in Africa, the political leadership of the West remains strangely complacent, while the extreme left rubs its hands, either ignorant of, or possibly even delighted by, the fact that with each triumph for our enemies the very survival of the Western political system becomes more and more uncertain.

With the same kind of *schadenfreude* with which they reported, and indeed encouraged, the disintegration of Iran, those sections of the western press and broadcasting organisations which thrive only in the presence or anticipation of maximum chaos are now turning their baleful eyes on the emergent China. Small and peaceful demonstrations in Peking are inflated into near-riots; the Human-Rights industry, one of the fastest growing industries of the 1970s, has identified a new market of exciting potential; and faced with the China-Viet Nam conflict, the Soviet Union and its friends in the West talk with breathtaking effrontery of Peking's aggressive policies.

THESE PREDICTABLE AND DEPRESSING attitudes are dangerous because they tend to divert attention from the *real* significance of post-Mao China—and from the problems of modernising a country containing a quarter of the world's population, raising it from post-feudal poverty to industrial prosperity before the end of the century (this is the goal which the Chinese have set for themselves) without at the same time imposing intolerable strains on the social and political structure of the country. Whether or not they succeed is a matter of profound importance for the West.

The economic problems themselves are, quite literally, frightening. Behind the four modernisations—now familiar coinage in the currency of debate about China—lies a programme of staggering complexity. As a first priority the whole apparatus of a modern industrial nation has to be created in what is, for all practical purposes, an underdeveloped country. Iron and steel complexes, petrochemical installations, coal and gas industries, ports, railways, telecommunications and modern port facilities all have to be created from nothing, or superimposed on an existing infrastructure which is, by Western standards, rudimentary. The agricultural system has to undergo a radical transformation which will replace with modern machinery the back-breaking labour of millions of peasants sometimes working with primitive farm implements, but more often only with their hands.

Chinese science and technology is, by any standards except those of a backward economy, totally inadequate. On my last visit to Peking a few weeks ago I attended, at one of China's most modern hospitals, a lecture on the treatment of chorionepithelioma—a female cancer, with a very high mortality, which is prevalent in the Far East. After the lecture I was shown the pathology laboratory available to the doctors carrying out the research and treatment. It was in a room no bigger than a prison cell, and it consisted of an incubator, a single optical microscope, and a large retort bubbling over a bunsen burner; upon this unpromising foundation the hospital doctors were trying to build a complicated structure of diagnosis and chemotherapy.

Finally, China has to bring the People's Liberation Army into the contemporary world. At present it is a vast horde of unspecialised soldiers, trained in the old-fashioned irregular tactics of the People's War, equipped with obsolescent Russian tanks and aircraft, inadequate artillery and a communications system beside which the British telephone service takes on an air of magical efficiency. Faced with a million Soviet troops on the border and the

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crushing threat of the most powerful nuclear striking force in the world, the Chinese know, in spite of their brave words about drawing the Russian hordes into the Chinese heartland before destroying them, that in the face of a Soviet attack, if it ever came, they would almost certainly have to make the dreadful choice between suicide and surrender.

TO ACHIEVE GREAT-POWER STATUS by the end of the century, with a modern industrial infrastructure, an efficient and mechanised agricultural system, a scientific and technological apparatus suitable to the economic demands of the 21st century, and defence forces capable of deterring any potential attacker, is a formidable task.

As a first step towards achieving it, the Chinese have been prepared to abandon more than one of their cherished principles. Although they still insist upon the virtues of self-reliance, they now accept the need to import foreign technology and to rely upon foreign contractors for the modernisation of their industry. Furthermore, they recognise that they cannot pay for it all in cash. The capital cost of even the first phase of their programme runs into billions of dollars, and the Chinese leadership has now openly announced its readiness to compromise with its revolutionary objections to borrowing money, and to turn for loans to the international capital market. As a further sign of their new pragmatism, they have not only rehabilitated the rich entrepreneurs who were banished during the Cultural Revolution, but agreed to reimburse them financially as well—presumably calculating that they will not only add to the inadequate reservoir of business and industrial skills in China, but also contribute to the capital investment.

This new, outward-looking, economic policy may solve some of the immediate problems of modernisation, but it raises some new ones as well. Already Japan, until recently a traditional enemy of the Chinese, is involved in about 30% of China's overseas trade—a state of affairs which gives rise in Peking to some uneasy feelings about economic imperialism. In any case, even if China, now that it is moving out of the phase of cash repayments, wanted to engage in trade with Japan on credit terms, it would find the yen too strong a currency to be attractive for long-term borrowing. And, wherever China borrows, it will, in three or four years, have to start repaying its loans; to do this it must generate foreign exchange by increasing its exports. Already China's leaders are beginning to put out some strong hints that future contracts for steel works, coal mines and oil wells might go only to those countries which are willing to import some of the products of these installations when they are completed.

SO FAR AS THE modernisation of its defence forces is concerned, China has already begun to run up against some of the difficulties which are inseparable from the international power game. A significant case in point is the interest of the Chinese government in the Harrier, the British vertical and short-take-off aircraft—known to the headline writers as the "jump-jet." Believing that the Harrier would considerably strengthen its border defences, the Chinese began to express an interest in buying it over a year ago. Although British Aerospace (the nationalised sector of the British aircraft industry) would have been delighted to sell it, the British government immediately came under pressure *not* to do so from all directions. There were, at first, strong hints from the United States that such a sale would be inconsistent with agreed Western policy on the supply of strategic materials to Communist countries; in any case, they suggested, it might be prejudicial to their efforts to reach an agreement on strategic arms limitations with the Russians. At the same time the Soviet-orientated wing of the Labour Party let the Prime Minister know that the sale of military aircraft to Russia's most hostile critics would incur their displeasure at a time when their sympathy and support were essential to the survival of the government. Finally, Mr Brezhnev (in a stupendously ill-timed and ill-advised intervention) announced that the sale would incur *his* displeasure too.

The result of all this is that the Chinese and British governments have been shadow-boxing warily with each other, with the Chinese reluctant to be too positive for fear of meeting with a refusal, and the British government, until recently, making noises which were designed to suggest that they might, in certain circumstances (and with due regard to the international climate obtaining at the time), be prepared to consider the possibility of selling some Harriers to China on certain conditions, or not, as the case may be—an exercise in obfuscation which did little to promote Anglo-Chinese relations or to encourage the Chinese to regard Britain as a most-favoured nation in its economic policy. The reaction of the British Left

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to the recent events in Viet Nam has complicated the issue still further.

This case history is symptomatic of the equivocation and ambiguity of the political leadership of the West when faced with the need to come to terms with the changing realities of power. Western military cooperation with China should not, of course, be approached without prudence and circumspection. It would be foolish to ignore the simple fact that China is a communist country, dedicated to the principles of Marx and Lenin, whose portraits, together with that of Engels, still occupy a place of honour in the Tien An Men Square in Peking. Chinese attitudes to the West have changed, suddenly and radically, once in the last few years, and they could change again overnight. But China is determined to be a super-power (although Chinese leaders might quarrel with the name) by the end of the century; and this is a fact with which the West will fail to come to terms only at its peril.

APART FROM THE international complications bedevilling China's current policies, there are agonising domestic problems as well. It is clear that the radical transformation of the economy which is now envisaged cannot be achieved without considerable strains on the political and social structure. In a country whose population will soon rise to a thousand million, the vast modernisation programme cannot be carried out effectively under the highly-centralised political system which has characterised China since the revolution. Already the process of decentralisation has begun, and there are fears among some of the more conservative leaders that this will loosen the grip of the Politburo and undermine the monolithic power of the state.

At the same time, the relaxation in the political atmosphere and the more extensive contacts with the world outside China have led to the first stirrings, however, vague, and so far limited, of democratic aspirations. There is talk of equality before the law, of an independent judiciary, and of freedom of speech and assembly. Small groups in Peking and the provincial cities are meeting to engage in political debate of a kind which would have been impossible—indeed unthinkable—a year ago. Far from discouraging these tentative essays in political freedom, the leadership has openly endorsed them. The final communiqué of last year's third plenary session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China included a passage which called for the strengthening of the legal system to ensure the stability and continuity of the democratic system; and Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-p'ing has firmly rejected the view of his more conservative comrades that the wall-poster campaign of criticism should be suppressed.

CHINA IS NOW FACING the classic political dilemma—the need to reconcile the apparently conflicting demands of freedom and order. The question is to what extent the revolution of rising expectations—both political and material—can be allowed to develop without damaging the collective effort to transform and modernise the economic structure of the country. If decentralisation results in fragmentation and the national will is dissipated in a preoccupation with popular democracy, the possibility of success in the four modernisations will be correspondingly reduced. On the other hand, unless the awakening aspirations of the Chinese people are realised, at least to some extent, it is unlikely that they will continue to apply themselves singlemindedly to the industrial revolution.

Faced with these considerations, it is perhaps not surprising that some foreign observers should begin to doubt the ability of the Chinese leadership to bring its ambitious plans to success. Yet there are many reasons for believing that China is capable of realising, if not all its declared aims, at least a very large proportion of them.

The first is the presence of the apparently indestructible Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who rose again from his political grave in 1977 and is now the driving force behind China's plan to take its place in the front rank of industrial powers by the end of the century. Indeed Teng's influence is now so pervasive and decisive that it has led some observers to speculate on the possibly disastrous consequences of his disappearance from the scene—he is after all, in his mid-70s. Apart from the fact that by the standards of Chinese political leadership he is still a comparatively young man, there are signs that he is taking care to ensure the continuity of his policies.

Ch'en Yun, an economic and financial expert, has recently been restored to the No. 5 place in the hierarchy—a place which he first occupied 25 years ago. In 1975 and 1976 he advocated without success the policy of decentralisation in economic decision-making, which is not the official policy of the leadership. On the other hand Wang Tung-hsing, the chief spokesman for the infallibility of

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Mao Tse-tung, has lost control of the propaganda apparatus and the Palace Guard—No. 8341 Unit of the PLA—and with it most of his power. One of Teng's closest younger collaborators, Hu Yao-tang, has recently been appointed to the important post of Secretary General of the Communist Party. The fear that the disappearance of Teng Hsiao-p'ing would lead to chaos is probably without substantial foundation.

But the stability of the leadership is not the only decisive factor in the equation. One of the most powerful reasons for believing that China has at least a reasonable chance of success in its latest revolution lies in the nature and character of the people themselves. Chinese society is impressively self-disciplined. It is a quality which is reflected in almost everything the Chinese do, and it will almost certainly enable them to survive the cultural and intellectual shocks which will be inseparable from the developments of the next few years, and to make China a decisive element in the power structure of the 1980s.

THESE APPARENTLY DISPARATE developments—the disintegration of Iran, which will almost inevitably follow Afghanistan into the Russian sphere of influence and further reinforce the significant shift in the strategic balance in the Middle East; the Soviet penetration of Africa; and the almost certain development of China into the predominant super-power of the Far East—contain the seeds of appalling dangers to international peace and stability in the 1980s. A pattern is emerging in which some of the most powerful or potentially powerful countries of the world—the United States, Western Europe, China and Japan—are gradually adopting a common posture of alignment against the Soviet Union. At the same time the Soviet Union is pursuing a policy of almost reckless expansion; and, what is more important, it is doing so from a great and growing military power base. The Russians, through a consistent policy of naval development, military aid to client states, and the calculated use of their Cuban allies as mercenaries, have developed a capacity for the global application of military power which neither China nor the Western powers can begin to match. The dangers of conflagration are enormous.

And it is here that one of the most important factors in the whole equation comes into play—the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

AS IT IS AT PRESENT drafted, the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II) has some serious defects. Leaving aside the more technical objections, it is likely to freeze the Soviet-American nuclear confrontation in a condition of Western inferiority. The way in which the two super-powers have developed their nuclear weapons systems means that, if SALT II is now signed and ratified, the Soviet Union will be consolidated in a position of being able to destroy, with a surprise attack, most of the American land-based ICBM force; while the United States will not be able to do the same to the Russian ICBMs. Whatever powerful arguments may be advanced about the military futility of this kind of "superiority", it has enormous political implications. Of course it will be pointed out that the submarine-launched missiles are still invulnerable and that no Russian leader would be mad enough to launch a pre-emptive counterforce strike. But this is to miss the point entirely.

If the nuclear balance, or imbalance, existed in a political and strategic vacuum, it might be possible to ignore it; but it does not. It exists in the context of Russian superiority in conventional forces in Europe, of a constant threat by powerful Soviet armoured forces to China, and of a Soviet capacity for the distant application of military power which the West does not possess. Furthermore, the evidence of Africa, the Middle East (and possibly now Viet Nam as well) indicates that the Soviet Union is engaged upon an aggressive expansionist foreign policy.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, it would clearly be dangerous to hand to the Russians, through SALT II, the geopolitical ace of strategic nuclear superiority. When the American President comes to sign the treaty, and the American Congress to ratify it , they should not be obsessed by arcane arguments about cruise missile ranges, non-circumvention clauses, or even the much more important problem of verification. All this should be seen in the overall global context of the next ten to fifteen years. The 1980s will almost certainly be a period of great tension and danger. The signature and ratification of SALT II will not remove or even lessen any of these dangers. Indeed, if the treaty comes into force without the evidence of some significant change in Russian military and foreign policies it may even increase them, and in a way which will shift the balance of power even further from the West.

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The Diversity of History—By GORDON LEFF

CONSIDERATION of any body of knowledge tends to raise two kinds of questions: how it works and what it is for. That applies also to history. But history is peculiar for the persistence of the attempt, long after the abandonment of a universalising teleology in most other branches of knowledge, to run the two together and to answer the first question by the second.

Philosophies of history, or historically-based philosophies, have been a feature of the 19th and 20th centuries, and their influence, particularly of Marxism, shows no signs of diminishing. They have almost always, from Augustine to Toynbee, been orientated towards the future, claiming to discern its direction from the laws or rhythms revealed in the study of the past. In that they are only elevating into a doctrine the tendency of history to explain past events by reference to their future outcome: the difference is that that tendency in varying degrees takes control, so that what results is history purporting to explain human destiny. The study of history does not therefore fall simply into two relatively clear categories of those who practise it and those who explain its principles; there is also the further class of those who take history as substantive truth in its own right.

The books noticed here represent each of these facets. Jean Chesneaux is in the most strident and, many would probably hold, debased line of Marxist prophecy, where history is something to be wrested from the opponents of proletarian and peasant revolution and made into a weapon for their emancipation. It is unspeakably dreary, and it would be desperately alarming if men like Jean Chesneaux were ever to be in a position to control the study or writing of history. Most of it has been heard before, except that since he is a specialist in Asian history many of the intended examples are drawn from Asia, Africa, the American Indians, and other victims of colonial and imperialist oppression. That they have been and are oppressed, although not now always by their former colonial masters, no one would probably deny. But Chesneaux's attack in *Pasts and Futures*[1] is much broader, directed against the whole class of professional historians, whom he regards as frauds, in conspiracy to suppress and distort the past in order to deny its discontinuity: another way of protesting against the refusal of most non-Marxists to see the scattered uprisings and disturbances every 50 or 100 or 200 years as the nodal points of development and significant change.

Why, it may be asked, is it so outrageous to record the survival of societies which continue to endure, if that is what they do? Because, of course, it denies the revolutionary character of history and its agents. And why do historians permit themselves so to deface the truth? Because they are corrupted. How? By security of tenure, by comfortable conditions removed from the struggle, by editorships, by contracts for books. Naturally, therefore, what they write must be rejected, and history taken out of their hands and put at the service of the revolution. So presumably must the theories of Newton and Einstein, who also wrote in studies and published books and papers and failed to join the Diggers or the proletarian revolution: which one is unsure because, we are told, Jean Chesneaux is a disillusioned professor of history at the Sorbonne, who, after 21 years in the French Communist Party, was converted to his present beliefs by the events of 1968.

His experience has made him "an angry and dissatisfied man", too angry and dissatisfied even for Geoffrey Barraclough, in his foreword to the book, to go all the way with him. Nevertheless, reading Chesneaux's book has "shattered" Barraclough's own "lingering belief in the neutrality of history" and forced him to rethink where we go from here. His advice to the general reader, at least,

[1] *Pasts and Futures, or What is History For?* By JEAN CHESNEAUX. Thames and Hudson, £4.95.

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is less drastic than Professor Chesneaux's: merely "not to reflect on history but to reflect on the world in which we live."

Both Chesneaux and Barraclough, in their different ways, expect something metahistorical from history: at the very least some practical guidance to the present and for Chesneaux the path to the millennium. History is more than a body of knowledge and its pursuit is actuated by more than intellectual curiosity. They are representative in their different attitudes even if they are unrepresentative of the majority of their profession.

IF NOTHING SHORT of history's complete apotheosis will satisfy Professor Chesneaux, some of Professor Barraclough's belief in a degree of truth value in history might be restored by reading R. F. Atkinson's *Knowledge and Explanation in History*.[2] It represents that other kind of philosophy of history, an analysis of history as a subject, drawn from the way it is written. It is therefore principally concerned with the practices of historians, not with the substance of their history, the historical events themselves. Professor Barraclough, like perhaps the majority of professional historians, is not in sympathy with what he calls "those logic-chopping disquisitions about the philosophy of history", to which he favourably contrasts Professor Chesneaux's book. Nevertheless, few prepared to take the trouble, including professional philosophers, would fail to benefit from reading Professor Atkinson's book. It has all the intellectual virtues of Chesneaux's defects; it is open-minded, clear-headed, balanced and wise; and its considered rationality is the best antidote to the twice-born imperatives of men like Chesneaux for whom there appears to be no room for alternatives, doubts, or pluralism.

Although nothing in Atkinson's book is especially novel, his treatment of some of the main problems connected with history as a field of knowledge and intellectual inquiry is consistently illuminating. As a general introduction to the questions of knowledge of the past, objectivity, explanation, causation, and values in history, it should take its place beside W. H. Walsh's established *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*. Atkinson shows repeatedly, without trying to minimise the issues involved, that a potent reason for their vexatiousness is the failure adequately to distinguish the meanings involved. Barraclough uses "neutrality" pejoratively to imply that history is in some way partisan and so presumably misleading or distorted. The implication would seem to be that it cannot be objective. But what does "neutral" refer to in the first place? To the facts of history? Or to the historian? And even if the facts are not neutral need the historian necessarily also be biased by them? To Barraclough, and certainly to Chesneaux, it seems he must.

To them the historian begins from the tainted sources of the rulers: "*their* tax lists, *their* censuses, *their* parish registers [which] provide us with the information *they* want" (Barraclough's italics). But who are *they*? And are they the same *they*? A tax list has a different function and comes from a different milieu from a parish register. If they tell us about anything it is about *us* who are taxed and are born and die: a plus surely for "the people." Nor is it obvious that what they tell us is any less a fact because we happen to disapprove of the ends for which it was designed or of the people who sought that knowledge. So far as its status as knowledge goes, all that Barraclough and Chesneaux are really saying is that they do not like what they know. But that is not a judgment on the truth-value of what they do not like, but on its values. Which is to say that some at least of the facts of history are value-charged.

THAT INDEED IS ONE OF history's salient characteristics, as historians and philosophers of history have for a considerable time now recognised. Wilhelm Dilthey used that recognition to distinguish the human studies, where man was the subject, from the natural sciences, which had nature as their object, to try to develop a specific historical epistemology which would enable the historian to identify the meaning contained in human actions and artefacts. To him as to R. G. Collingwood in a rather different way, men act according to ends from values and intentions. What they do cannot therefore be separated from what they see themselves as doing.

Every time an historian examines a coin or a charter or a fortification or a legal code it is not enough to take them on their appearances. To understand why a particular term is employed or something is built in a particular position we must identify what meaning it had at the time and what it was designed to do. The need to give events a context is central to historical practice. It takes the form of historical shorthand, dividing past occurrences into longer or shorter periods or conjunctions, like the "Middle Ages" or the "Reformation" or the "Industrial Revolution", in order to be able to place events and give them some coherence. It is pointless attempting to treat, say, table manners in an age when there were no forks, or justice when there was no act of *habeus corpus*, by the same criteria as in an age when these existed. But, conversely, the contrast between their existence and non-existence must itself be part of the data by which they are compared and evaluated.

[2] *Knowledge and Explanation in History*. By R. F. ATKINSON. Macmillan Press, £7.50.

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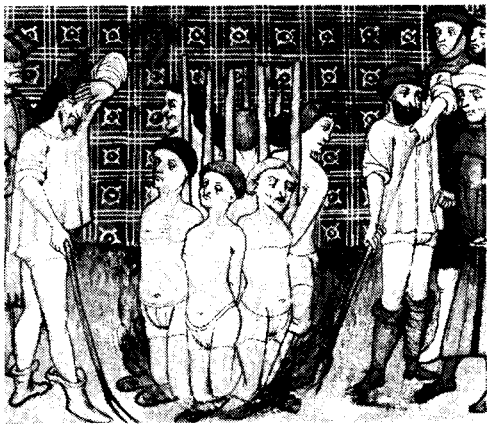

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In that sense it is not only true that historians are presented with facts which contain values but they have themselves to evaluate those facts and values, in characterising them and deciding what to select and exclude in studying a period. Two different kinds of evaluation are therefore involved in history.

So far as the first goes, it does not follow, as Professor Atkinson clearly shows, that to *recognise* value-judgments within the subject matter of history is itself to engage in value-judgments. To record that in the Middle Ages all Christians were Roman Catholics or that Mercantilists believed in the intrinsic value of bullion is as much to record historical facts as that Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo; they commit the historian to nothing beyond stating them and elucidating them as part of the data of the appropriate period, and they can be stated in the same way without approval or disapproval.

Moreover, their recognition enters into the historian's own evaluations, which is the second kind of evaluation. Here his role is in principle analogous to that of any investigator in whatever field. Independently of his own personal predilections which may bring him to an area of study, or his sympathies, he must proceed on the basis of the evidence and valid inference from it. If he has omitted or misinterpreted something he is as open to criticism as in any systematic body of his knowledge.

HISTORICAL REASONING is no different from any other kind; it is merely in relation to a different kind of evidence from that in, say, physics. Nor, as Professor Atkinson cogently argues, is it distinguished from scientific or everyday knowledge in being only probable. There is a similar division in history between events that can be regarded as true—Napoleon's exile to St Helena or the date of the outbreak of the First World War in 1914—and those that are open to conjecture. Truth in history no more depends directly upon memory than it does in the real world; and there are the same means open to historians to conclude with as much certainty as any non-logical truth possesses that such and such an event occurred. What is distinctive about history is that its knowledge is inferential and can never be directly experienced or recreated empirically, as many events in the sciences can be. Which is not the same as confining those inferences to being merely probable (an opinion which I earlier held and which Professor Atkinson has persuaded me was mistaken).

Of course the historian is at the mercy of his evidence in so far as he can only use what has come down to him. To that extent Barraclough's stress upon *their* sources is true for most but the recent past, in comparison with which it will always be partial and incomplete in a different way from the incompleteness which comes from having to select in order to be intelligible: a prerequisite of all intellectual inquiry. That, however, does not make its history inherently more biased; indeed it may facilitate the identification of bias in the sources through their paucity in number or kind. As Marc Bloch observed, the study of forged charters can be as historically revealing as the study of genuine ones, and may tell us more about the conditions and values of a society which occasioned them.

"NEUTRALITY", then, is an inappropriate word to apply to history in the first place; for its subject matter is very often non-neutral. Hence to say that history is not neutral is not in itself to condemn it as inherently biased. But nor does the historian, as an historian, have to be a partisan; if he is he will be challenged by partisans and non-partisans alike. Far from the sources exercising their spell to produce a servile unison, history is distinguished by its irreducible diversity of interpretations over virtually every issue and nowhere more than over the Revolution in Chesneaux's native France: some conspiracy of silence!

That diversity arises because there is no obligation to regard men and human affairs from any single point of view. It is possible to see the same event as a good thing or a bad thing, as more or less significant, as caused by human failings or by society, by individuals or collectives, by chance or by long-term factors, social, economic, political, moral. The language of history is the everyday qualitative language of human experience, and its judgments and generalisations are anthropomorphic. This gives them a range that contrasts with the universal conditional form that those in the natural sciences take. They also provide a multiplicity of standpoints from which the past can be approached—expressed, among other things, in the growth of different kinds of history.

At first sight that seems to contradict the view that there can be impartial, unbiased history. To that two replies can be made.

THE FIRST IS THAT HISTORY is not synonymous with the past; it differentiates the past into different histories, so that, in contrast to Chesneaux, the past is not something that can be appropriated; it is the past analysed and reconstructed into the totality of histories that make it accessible and intelligible. These can be both complementary and competing according to their standpoint and objective; but they can only claim the status of history if they are in accordance with the evidence. The differences come over the way in which that evidence is judged

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and interpreted. But it remains the same evidence, producing the same truths: Caesar was killed in the Senate, Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, the First World War broke out in 1914 and involved the main powers. In that sense it is the same history for everyone.

THE SECOND REPLY is that history is in some sense a dialogue between the past and the present. It is written after the event in the light of its outcome. It therefore always has an ineliminable element of the future about it. As Professor Atkinson remarks, one can only talk about a First World War after 1939, and while its events remain irrevocable, their significance and even their character may become modified in comparison with succeeding wars. Much the same can apply to epochs or individuals. The past is therefore refracted through the present; and the historian from the distance of the past's future must bring a different perspective to events from that of those who were involved: the distinction to which Dilthey drew attention between the incoherence of lived experience and the coherence of recounted history.

That perspective changes because, unlike natural phenomena which for most purposes are assumed to behave necessarily and invariably, the standing presumption in human affairs is that men—certainly those who are agents of change—have choices and can decide between alternatives. They are therefore judged in accordance with what appear to be the canons appropriate to their circumstances and capacities. Historical judgment thus contains an inseparable element of human evaluation: not merely of how well or evilly an individual or a nation may have behaved, but their achievement intellectually or aesthetically or militarily or politically, or whatever that involves, tempering the canons of the present to the norms of the past—an area of judgment crucial to history, which helps to account for their often limited and timebound nature. It involves steering between the Scylla of treating the past exclusively in its own terms, so that it loses its identity and difference, and the Charybdis of subsuming that past under the criteria of the present when history becomes at least morality or, as Chesneaux's book illustrates, something rather worse.

HISTORICAL EVENTS beyond comparatively simple ones do not therefore readily lend themselves to precise explanation. And the nature of explanation in history has been among the main concerns of post-War English-speaking philosophers of history. Burleigh Taylor Wilkins, in *Has History Any Meaning?*,[3] credits Sir Karl Popper with having been responsible for it and regards him as the most important philosopher of history since Hegel, a measure of his and others' preoccupation with explanation.

In fact, as Professor Wilkins shows, Popper's own position is ambivalent; indeed in one sense paradoxical. For in *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945) Popper's main target is precisely the use of history to predict the future which he identifies with totalitarianism; and yet in one of its later chapters he himself sketches an account of historical explanation in terms of universal, or covering, laws which by definition are predictive. Although claiming to be its originator, Popper has never pressed the concept of covering laws to the limits taken by others. He has, rather, been more impressed by the absence of specifically historical laws, maintaining that history uses a multiplicity of laws drawn from all kinds of knowledge and usually of such an obvious nature as to be trivial.

As Professor Wilkins shows, this position is inherently unsatisfactory, including the examples of such laws that Popper gives. It would be better to go the whole way and say that because nothing can be explained without implicitly belonging to some law in principle, every statement made in history as in everyday life belongs under a law. The problem is logically to bring them together into a coherent formulation: a task which seems beyond the powers of discussive thought. In practice, if not in logic, the multi-causal character of many historical events, such as the outbreak of a world war or a revolution or a decline of a nation, or even a battle, provides one more area for diversity of explanation, as Professor Atkinson illustrates.

MORE INTERESTING, and hardly less influential, is Popper's so-called "situational logic" which he employs to explain actions in opposition to the appeal to individual psychology or dispositions. Situational logic, on the contrary, takes account of an individual's social circumstances, the position in which he finds himself, and deduces his actions from his rational response to those circumstances. Unlike Collingwood's emphasis upon identifying and rethinking a past agent's thoughts, Popper deliberately excludes any direct involvement with thought, confining himself to an analysis of situation.

The criticism of both Popper's and Collingwood's position is that history is not confined to rational or considered individual actions; so that even if it were true that they act according to defined and considered ends, that would account for only a small proportion of the total actions and

[3] *Has History Any Meaning? A Critique of Popper's Philosophy of History*. By BURLEIGH TAYLOR WILKINS. Harvester Press, £10.50.

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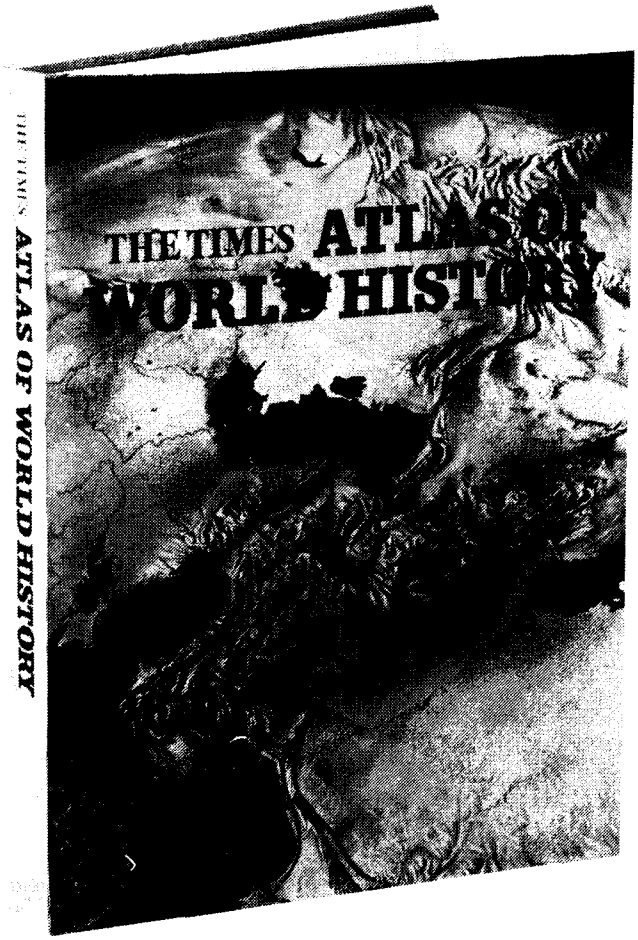

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movements which are neither discernibly rational in the sense of being from reflexion, nor the work of any one agent: Popper himself talks of the unforeseen consequences of actions, which must themselves be taken into account. In Popper's explanation there is not even allowance for the situation which the agent *thinks* he is in. He thereby excludes one of the most crucial data from history and human affairs: the discrepancy between what in fact was the case and what was taken to be the case—perhaps the cause of more wars than any other single factor. In keeping with his positivist bent, Popper's division is between facts and values. He tends to treat history as merely an extension of the same procedures employed in science—of identifying the facts. It leads him to ignore the very implication of situational logic, namely that if men act deliberately they choose between alternatives. Their action cannot therefore be subject to the universalising and predictive formalism of the natural sciences. Much of Popper's discussion is thus inappropriate to the theory and practice of history.

IF HISTORY IS THE WORK neither of Chesneaux's activist, making it through revolution, nor of Popper's investigator treating it as a collection of generalisations methodologically assimilable in principle to those of the natural sciences, but, as Atkinson recognises, an independent field of inquiry producing its own knowledge according to its own canons, none of these books of their nature manages to convey the other side of history: as it appears to those involved. Even Atkinson has disappointingly little to say on the limited, timebound nature of historical generalisations or the contextual, epochal nature of historical judgments. That missing element is provided by Dolf Sternberger, in *Panorama of the Nineteenth Century*,[4] not as a further contribution to the discussion, but in a series of chapters on popular ideas and artefacts from the 19th century which together convey what it felt like to be living then.

They provide the immediacy and lack of proportion towards the great technological and social developments of those directly involved, and show more vividly than any invocation of history, or systematic exposition on its practice, the contrast between living in the present and looking back upon it as the past. History consists in bringing them together, whatever the conclusions which may be drawn from it.

[4] *Panorama of the Nineteenth Century*. By DOLF STERNBERGER. Blackwell, £10.

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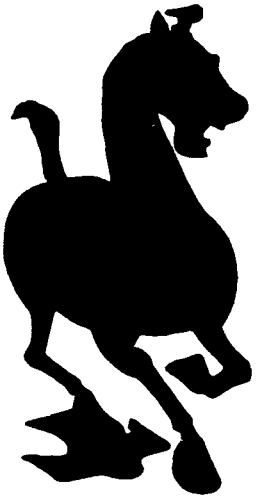

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The Renaissance—By FRANCES YATES

IN THE AGES of what has been termed "scribal culture", all reading matter was written by hand. The chief function of the learned man, or scholar, was the transmission of available knowledge through scribal labours. The scribal culture stretched from the dawn of history to the middle of the 15th century A.D. when the printing presses introduced a miraculous and magical way of dispensing with the scribe. The age of print culture began and has been continuing up to the present, that is for about six centuries—a pathetically short space of historical time compared to the untold scribal ages which preceded it.

This obvious fact is so enormous that its sheer size tends to make us forget it. The advent of printing meant that many copies of texts and diagrams could be made simultaneously; it meant that scholars could use libraries of printed books instead of having to travel to read rare manuscripts. In her remarkable book *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*,[1] Elizabeth Eisenstein argues that printing should not be listed with gunpowder and the compass as one of several inventions which came into use in the Renaissance. It was the one invention which made possible the whole subsequent astonishingly rapid evolution of European culture, which spread the scientific advance which fostered the rapid interchange of ideas. Rather fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay, as Tennyson remarked in his prophetic utterances.

The ages of scribal culture were also the ages of memorising. It was intensely important to hold in memory the knowledge so difficult to refer to in scarce manuscripts, to store in memory the material of culture. As is now well known, the classical art of memory, using striking images remembered on memory-places, was widely used, and its techniques affected basic mental processes, and even the design of manuscripts or the arrangement of buildings. When I look back on my own work over the past decades I am always oppressed by the thought of how little I have done, how I have only touched the outskirts or fringes of subjects which I have attempted, how many are the paths branching out from these subjects which are still untrodden.

I think of those dramatic masks, expressive masks of comedy or tragedy, to be seen here and there in ancient frescos. Are these intended to be used in memory systems, based on these frescos—expressive dramatic masks providing striking images to fix points in a memory system? The long descriptions of pictured rooms in buildings described in narrative poetry, both classical and post-classical, are almost certainly related to the principles of the classical mnemonic. I have touched in my book on *The Art of Memory* on how the Gothic interpretation of artificial memory underlies much medieval art, and must be studied in relation to the great *summae* expressed in images on places in the medieval church, on how the advice for making images memorable affects the figures of virtues and vices. Those who have deeply studied the virtue-vice systems, for example the late Rosamund Tuve, have thrown much light on them but have omitted the important point that in their exaggerated expressiveness these images are following the classical advice for making images memorable.

The more I think of it, the more obvious it seems to me that memory is the chief object aimed at in the putting into images of the medieval encyclopaedia. The whole subject awaits a general and extensive treatment, and one which might fascinatingly combine art, imagination, and memory, and the transformation of a classical theme into Gothic expression. One of the books which I would like to write, and may still write if I have time, would be on Dante and the Art of Memory, using *summae* of similitudes by Dominican preachers. The varied images of Prudence which run through the *Inferno* underline the theme that it is a part of Prudence to remember Hell.

MEMORY SYSTEMS and memory principles continue into the age of print but their roots were in the scribal age and they gradually became no longer a prime necessity. Memory patterns continue to be discernible in the print culture, for example in the lay-outs of Ramist logic which are often copied from the patterns in Lullist manuscripts (Lullism was a form of the art of memory). The impact of

[1] *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe.* By ELIZABETH L. EISENSTEIN. Cambridge University Press, 2 Vols, £35 (Vol. 1, £20; Vol. 2, £17.50); $49.50 (Vol. 1, $29.50; Vol. 2, $24.50).

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the artificial memory and its techniques on the print culture, which began to dispense with it, is pointed out by Eisenstein in many perceptive remarks. She mentions that printing was sometimes significantly called "the artificial writing." The artificial writing of print took over the functions of the artificial memory. The print culture released the scribe from the bondage of copying. It also released memory from the heavy artificial burdens upon it. A culture which the need for memorisation renders static is replaced by a culture liberated by print to put all its powers into original thinking and advance. Though Eisenstein's thesis of the enormous importance of the switch to print as a factor in the development of European culture in the centuries after the 15th century may seem a stating of the obvious, yet the force and detail with which she has driven the truth home are impressive.

The use of printing does not account for the choice of the themes which the print culture developed. These were already there. As Eisenstein points out, there had been many classical Renaissances before the Petrarchan and Italian Renaissance of the 15th century, but the Italian Renaissance achieved permanence through being fixed by the print culture. Printing does not account for European culture or solve the problems of its history. It is only the improved technological tool which made possible its vast development, which made available a hugely increased range of knowledge.

THE NEW PRINT CULTURE printed everything, Hermetic philosophy as well as Aristotelian, alchemical treatises as well as mathematical treatises. Eisenstein is chiefly interested in the development of 17th-century physical science which she argues was strongly assisted by printing and its techniques of organisation. Allen Debus in *Man and Nature in the Renaissance*[2] gives a more general picture of the science of "Renaissance man" by including alchemy-chemistry, and here again (though he is not concerned with this) the print culture comes into play. Would the alchemical Renaissance have developed as powerfully as it did without the energy of printers in printing huge volumes of alchemical texts? Would the spread of learned magic have been so far-reaching without the spread of the literature of magic? Ficino drew his magic images of the planets and of the decans from manuscript sources. Giordano Bruno quotes his magic images from the printed work of Cornelius Agrippa.

It was the whole of the European tradition, literary and cultural, theological and philosophical, scientific and magical, which poured in ever-increasing volume from the rapidly increasing and expanding print-shops. Out of this great volume, and its accompanying thought-movements, arose the predominantly print-culture of modern Europe. Eisenstein's thesis owes something, as she acknowledges, to the McLuhan fashion, but she develops this in a much more reasonable and convincing way.

In contemplating the extraordinary record laid out in print in the era which followed Gutenberg and the establishment of printing presses, we are impressed by the fact—an obvious fact which Eisenstein has made us see—of its all-inclusiveness. The exciting newly-established print culture increased the imagery available to poets and artists, familiarised the world with the great literatures of the past, served mathematics and science through the printing of scientific texts. It also favoured the development of Neoplatonic and Hermetic mysticism. The occult, the mystical, the numerological-Pythagorean movement grew in volume, and the "genuinely" scientific or mathematical approaches to nature grew with it. There is certainly an interrelation, or mutual influences of some kind, between the two.

[2] *Man and Nature in the Renaissance.* By ALLEN G. DEBUS. Cambridge University Press, £7.95, paper £2.50; $15.95, paper $4.95.

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IN SOME OF MY BOOKS, particularly *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, I have endeavoured to make some study of this problem. I would like, however, to take this opportunity of stating clearly and firmly that there is no "Yates thesis" about this. The expression is erroneous and puts a wrong colouring on my work. As I am never tired of repeating, in prefaces and elsewhere, I am only a historian, and I have urged that historians of thought and culture should include within their purview the vast literature vaguely called "occult" which proliferated to such an extraordinary degree, particularly in the late 16th and early 17th centuries. The "occult" literature should not be ostracised from "genuine" historical studies but should be tackled as a historical problem, demanding accurate and careful historical work for its elucidation. This is not a "thesis", or a doctrinaire statement of any kind. It is simply a call for work, urging the research scholars of the present and the future to undertake the mapping and critical examination of a vast body of neglected material.

Yates is painfully aware that she has not done nearly enough work (and that her time for new work is running out). I have vaguely called the movements with which I have been concerned "Hermetic-Cabalist" and in my books I have concentrated mainly on the Hermetic side, though I did devote a chapter in *Bruno* to Pico della Mirandola and the Cabala. More and more I begin to see that the Cabalist side, and its yoking together with the Hermetic, is essential. Dee's *monas* sign was Hermetic and magical, Pythagorean and numerological, but it was also Cabalist, concerned with the profound mysteries of the Hebrew alphabet. Until we try to wrestle seriously with "Christian Cabala", we are not fully facing the whole problem. In my next book I make an attempt at this. It will not be a "Yates thesis" but only another Yates attempt at laborious digging, or a sign-posting of fields in the hope that others will dig more deeply.

A QUESTION which is continually nagging at me now is the question of the censorship. Amongst the many suggestive observations made by Eisenstein is her remark that we have no clear history of the censorship as it developed in the 16th and 17th centuries, of which books were put on the index and when, of changes in emphasis in censoring, and their dates, of what were the main lines of thought objected to by the Council of Trent, of how these objections were acted upon by the censors and in what order. Lack of clarity about this subject, or of adequate scholarly treatment of it, may account, or partially account, for our uncertainty about the end of the Renaissance, or about what stopped the

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Renaissance, or, if it did not entirely end, through what altered or distorted forms it continued. The thought occurs that if we were sometimes to begin, not with the rise of the Renaissance but with its decline, and work backwards from there, we might learn much. The lack of adequate history of the censorship, which Eisenstein has noted, makes it difficult to follow through what stages the movement of repression passed. The Italian scholar, Antonio Rotondo, has indicated some aspects of the movement against Platonism, and Neoplatonism, and their attendant occultisms, which was certainly a part of ecclesiastical post-Tridentine policy. He notes that Platonism in association with Cabala was considered particularly dangerous. I have seen in censored copies of works by Francesco Giorgi, in words written in ink on the title-page by the censor, the warning that the work is to be read with caution because it contains errors of "Platonists and Cabalists". This may be an important clue; that is to say, Cabalist Neoplatonism or Neoplatonic Cabalism may have been a particularly explosive charge the suppression of which entailed loss of Renaissance force, or the distortion or deflection of that force into other channels. When found in association with Paracelsian alchemy (itself influenced by Hermeticism and Cabala), Christian Cabala may have turned into "Rosicrucianism."

A good many years ago I drew attention in a lecture (afterwards published) to the importance of Francesco Giorgi's *De harmonia mundi* as a Renaissance text, objected to and criticised by Marin Mersenne, though it obviously influenced Mersenne's own *Harmonie universelle*. I suggested that it might be revealing to make a detailed comparison of the two works in order to try to define why Giorgi is still "Renaissance" while Mersenne has moved into the beginnings of the "Scientific Revolution." So far as I am aware this detailed comparison has not yet been made. I now suggest that a fuller exploration of the Christian Cabalist movement is necessary for the understanding of Mersenne's attitude to Giorgi, which may have had something to do with the shift away from Cabalist studies in orthodox circles. We know too little about this shift and its stages, which must surely have affected the Renaissance atmosphere which owed so much to Pico della Mirandola's combination of Christian Cabala with Ficino's Neoplatonism. What happened, for example, to Cardinal Egidius of Viterbo's movement for Catholic reform, based on Christian Cabalist arguments which became unorthodox?

My own view is that the outcry against magic and witchcraft, which grew to such alarming proportions in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, profoundly affected the late history of Renaissance Neoplatonism and its associated occultisms. The frantic propaganda in Germany in

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the early years of the Thirty Years War against Rosicrucians, the fever of which spread to France, must be taken into account as the background against which Mersenne so cautiously avoids implication with the Rosicrucians, and their "horrible pacts" with the devil as depicted in contemporary Jesuit propaganda. In my next book I make the daring statement that, under the pressure of such attacks and hysterical fears, the Renaissance Magus turned into Faust. This atmosphere must be reckoned with in attempts to discern what became of the Renaissance. Such attempts may sometimes involve trying to peer through the fog of the witch craze.

IN *MAN AND NATURE IN THE RENAISSANCE*, Allen Debus has produced an admirably balanced account of how Hermeticism, and Neoplatonic mysticism generally, affected the Scientific Revolution. The great advantage, or the great novelty, of Debus's book is that it is cast in the form of a history-of-science textbook, yet includes with its account of the exact sciences in the period (particularly mathematics-astronomy and medicine-chemistry) a survey of the occult, or mystical, or Hermetic approaches to nature as inextricably bound up with the whole movement of thought, which included both the magical and mystical and the "genuinely" scientific. Thus, as the cover-flap states, this book is "an ideal textbook for students taking courses in the history of science and the general history of western civilisation." Published by the Cambridge University Press in its History of Science series (and also available in paperback) nothing could be more respectable, yet, in its quiet way, this book represents a minor revolution. It overcomes one of the main difficulties which have stood in the way of the encouragement by reputable scholars of the study of the "Hermetic" and the "occult" in the Renaissance. I have always felt that the chief obstacle may have been a "teaching" obstacle. How can the "occult" subjects be integrated into a Renaissance course for students? Debus provides the answer by providing this perfectly sensible textbook.

Reading its lucid pages I find myself constantly meeting with subjects with which I have long been concerned, and with personalities who figure in my own works. After headed paragraphs ("Observation and Experiment", or "Mathematics and Natural Phenomena") designed to provide the student with the kind of prepared food to which he is accustomed, we come to "Mysticism and Science", and here we read that "A fourth ingredient in the formation of science . . . was the new Renaissance interest in the mystical approach to nature." The *monas* or the One is being chopped up into student-food, but at least the student's diet

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has been enriched by an essential ingredient. This is followed by a discussion of the work of Robert Fludd (to whose huge works Debus has devoted a lifetime of study), and who is here said to offer "an excellent example of an Hermetic-chemical approach to mathematics." And some pages later the student meets John Dee and his hieroglyphic *monad*, and is introduced to the "Christian neo-Platonic and Hermetic philosophy of Paracelsus."

Thus this student's handbook on Renaissance astronomy, mathematics, medicine, anatomy, chemistry, botany, husbandry, and the developing sciences generally, is firmly correlated to the mystical, the occult, the Hermetic, in the Renaissance outlook. It is skilfully done, and undoubtedly right in its general outlines. It should mean that the new historical approach to the occult sciences has arrived, and will continue.

The Past Preserved

Environmental Archaeology—By GEOFFREY DIMBLEBY

ONE RARELY COMES ACROSS a definition of environmental archaeology. It is a term which came into use between the wars and as it has developed as a subject in its own right has been defined by usage rather than concept. Consequently, there has sprung up a wide range of approaches to studies under this heading, and this diversity is reflected in a number of publications which have appeared in the last year or so.

Perhaps the best known pioneer work in this field was by F. E. Zeuner, and his book *Dating the Past* (first ed. 1946) is still the standard reference. This work epitomises the approach of that time, with its emphasis on dating. Climatic changes through and since the Pleistocene were reflected in fauna, flora, sea-levels, etc., and, if these could be dated, archaeological sites and artifacts could sometimes be slotted into a point on the spectrum of change and so themselves approximately dated. This was a great advance over the guesswork which had prevailed up till then, particularly for the Palaeolithic, which fell outside the better known (though still imperfect) chronology of the Post-glacial. Furthermore, because of their great age, and therefore their liability to disruption and dispersion, sites of this period rarely contained many organic remains, so that associations usually had to be indirect.

This situation is still substantially true for the earliest periods of human history. In February 1975 a symposium was held to discuss the hundreds of hominid fossils that had been found in the Gregory Rift Valley in Africa over the past two decades. The proceedings of this conference have now appeared in a book entitled *Geological Background to Fossil Man*,[1] edited by the late Bill Bishop. Here are the same problems of correlation which Zeuner so often faced: correlations based on geology, on fauna and, to a very minor extent in this tropical setting, on plant remains. In one important respect, however, things have changed; it is now possible through more refined and sophisticated techniques to obtain actual dates on fossiliferous deposits. Palaeo-magnetism has also been introduced as a new tool which can help stratigraphic and palaeontological correlations. The subject matter of this book extends back in time beyond what can legitimately be called archaeology, but in doing so it emphasises the essential continuity of the stock of mankind—and that for diverse reasons it is as necessary to learn as much as we can about the environment of the early hominids as it is to learn about the setting of our more recent ancestors.

Indirect treatment of this sort is today appropriate only to the early periods where our knowledge of the environment is of necessity incomplete and man's place in it even more obscure. When we come to the Post-glacial period it is possible to give a much more detailed picture of the environment and to show how it developed with time. Furthermore, we can detect in the environment the influence of man on his surroundings, even in the pre-agricultural periods. Pollen analysis, which in Zeuner's day was primarily regarded as a dating method, has now yielded to radiocarbon dating for this purpose, but it has developed other uses, particularly in the light it can shed on landscape changes, and in this it has been augmented by other biological techniques such as molluscan analysis. Today much can be deduced about the contemporary environment of prehistoric man without any reference to archaeology.

Ecology and Economy in Neolithic Eastern Europe, by the Soviet archaeologist Paul Dolukhanov,[2] is a most valuable presentation of the state of modern knowledge about archaeology and the associated environmental contexts in a part of the world poorly chronicled in Western literature.

[1] *Geological Background to Fossil Man.* Edited by W. W. BISHOP. Scottish Academic Press, £25.

[2] *Ecology and Economy in Neolithic Eastern Europe.* By PAUL DOLUKHANOV. Duckworth, £14.

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In his introductory chapter Dolukhanov discusses ecological concepts theoretically, drawing freely on European and American thought. However, when it comes to considering the environmental setting in the different regions described, the hoped-for inter-relationships are not found. There are abundant references to pollen analyses, natural resources of food, and so forth, but little recognition that man himself was an ecological factor. The word "fire" does not appear in the index, nor is there any apparent awareness that man could damage his environment. This partly stems from the philosophy of Russian ecology, but also, I think, from the fact that the environmental evidence quoted (as distinct from the economic) is not site-linked but is all derived from external sources.

Some palaeo-ecologists believe that this type of evidence gives the archaeologist all he needs (and, indeed, that it is all that is obtainable) in order to relate man to his contemporary environment. This might be so if archaeology itself had nothing to contribute to our understanding of the environment, but it has, and in my judgment that contribution is often something that cannot be obtained any other way. Good examples of this use of environmental evidence are to be found in the multi-author work *The Early Postglacial Settlement of Northern Europe*[3] edited by Paul Mellars. This book, too, is written by people who are primarily archaeologists, but they have been able to draw upon the environmental evidence from the various areas covered, and weave it into their archaeological interpretation. Perhaps it was Star Carr that set Mesolithic archaeology on this course, for this site was made to yield a wealth of environmental information which Grahame Clark brought together in terms of the way men lived. This field of archaeology has probably seen a greater revolution in thought than any other, and I believe this is due in no small measure to the fact that archaeologists were prepared to take environmental archaeology into their system. Mellars' book brings us up to date on this development, and in a number of the papers evidence from the sites themselves is used on a par with that from external sources. It is particularly interesting to see Mellars and Reinhardt discussing with authority a question such as soil deterioration and how it could have been the inevitable outcome of the use of fire by Mesolithic man in some ecological contexts.

[3] *The Early Postglacial Settlement of Northern Europe*. Edited by PAUL MELLARS. Duckworth, £18.

SO MUCH EVIDENCE has now come from archaeological sites themselves that it is practically a matter of routine on a "well-conducted" excavation that samples should be

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taken for environmental analysis: samples for analysis of soil, pollen, seeds, animal remains, and so on, according to what is appropriate (and too often without this qualifying clause). Perhaps this approach has reached its most intensive use in urban archaeology. The fact that deposits in urban contexts are frequently waterlogged means that organic remains of many sorts may be well preserved in quantity, and the archaeologist, hopeful of unsuspected information, calls the specialist in.

At present we are still trying to evaluate the worth of such analyses. In many cases it is not easy to extrapolate from such remains to the wider environment; on the other hand, the organic residues may give other valuable types of evidence. For instance the presence of non-native seeds in Roman deposits in London may indicate trade. One of the most important investigations of biological material in an urban context has been carried out on Anglo-Scandinavian and later levels at York, where bones, molluscs, insects, pollen and other plant material have been investigated by a team of specialists. A recent publication by H. K. Kenward, *The Analysis of Archaeological Insect Assemblages: A New Approach*,[4] illustrates both the potentialities of this kind of analysis and the practical difficulties of applying it in our present state of knowledge. Insect remains extracted from a sample represent a "death assemblage"; their bodies have come to lie together in the archaeological deposit, but there is no proof that in life there was any connection between the groups. Kenward has investigated modern assemblages and shown some of the pitfalls of interpretation which the unwary or unaware analyst can fall into. On the other hand, he points out that the insects found in such places, mostly Coleoptera, comprise species whose ecological distribution is often scarcely known, so that the inferring of adjacent habitats is hazardous. Nevertheless, Kenward's approach can confirm, contradict, or extend the archaeological interpretation of features, even if the value for environmental purposes must at present be regarded as unproven.

SO EVIDENCE ABOUT past environments is not solely to be obtained from the natural features of the landscape, such as lake deposits, mires, dunes, valley fill, and so forth. Evidence can also come from archaeological sites themselves. This dual approach has been clearly set out in a useful little book entitled *An Introduction to Environmental Archaeology*, by J. G. Evans.[5] It is written as a simple introduction to the subject and succeeds well in this purpose. Evans himself is known for his work on molluscan assemblages obtained from archaeological sites on calcareous soils, but he gives full attention to what might be termed background environmental studies. The last two chapters of his book are headed "Natural Situations" and "Archaeological Situations." It becomes apparent from this last chapter that the archaeological situations can contribute evidence which is not obtainable, except perhaps by indirect inference, from natural situations. This clearly must be so. A pollen sequence from a peat bog may indicate that somewhere in the vicinity there has been a transition from woodland conditions to heathland conditions, presumably as the result of human influence. An archaeological site in this area can provide the concrete evidence of a heathland soil profile, which itself contains a pollen sequence reflecting the successional changes. The types of information from the two sources are therefore not necessarily the same; they may complement each other. Furthermore, such a site provides a direct link with the archaeologist's findings about the cultural and economic activities of the contemporary people.

Where man is having a marked local influence this may be detectable on a site but may scarcely even be suggested by background analysis. A case in point is my own finding of high concentrations of ivy (*Hedera*) pollen on a number of Mesolithic sites, referred to in Mellars' book. This is without parallel in peat and lake pollen sequences, but may be of major importance as showing that pre-agricultural man was practising some form of animal husbandry, using ivy as a winter fodder. Organic remains from archaeological sites should be treated positively and constructively, and not dismissed out of hand—as they sometimes are—as useless by-products of the conditions of preservation.

LET US LOOK at some other recent publications to see how such relationships have been treated. John Bintliff has published a massive work: *Natural Environment and Human Settlement in Prehistoric Greece*.[6] This is an important study, surveying the prehistory of Greece in its environmental setting; the author himself has visited many of the sites described and worked on their sediments, and is therefore in a good position to link background evidence with site evidence. He gives a very useful survey of geomorphology, vegetation

[4] *The Analysis of Archaeological Insect Assemblages: A New Approach*. By H. K. KENWARD. The Archaeology of York: Fascicule 19/1. Council for British Archaeology, £4.75.

[5] *An Introduction to Environmental Archaeology*. By JOHN G. EVANS. Elek, £5.95; paper £2.95.

[6] *Natural Environment and Human Settlement in Prehistoric Greece*. By JOHN L. BINTLIFF. British Archaeological Reports (122 Banbury Road, Oxford). Supplementary Series 28 (i) and 28 (ii), £13.50 (parts i and ii together).

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and soils, though clearly he is most at home with the sediments themselves and their origins. By studying the deposits found under, around and above sites he can often link these into wider landscape changes such as erosion phases, alluviation or changes in sea-level. This sort of synthesis is a major contribution in the study of the archaeology of specific landscape units, but the fact that the arguments are based on one parameter only—the sediments—must engender some doubt about the conclusions regarding the ecology in the wider sense.

Bintliff deduces, with good reason, which sediments would have been most suited to agriculture, which would have carried woodland, and so on. But on this line of argument he finds himself in conflict with ecologists, particularly on the question whether the dramatic soil erosion in some of the areas studied was due to man or was a purely natural process caused by erratic rainfall on unstable sediments on steep slopes. Bintliff takes the latter view, and the implication is that ecologists tend to theorise without having studied the problem on the ground. To take one particular case where he is variance with the ecologists, he says:

> A close examination of the place of Melos within the general constraints of its sector of the Aegean reveals a predictable scarcity of rainfall and intensity of evaporation, that combine with the naturally arid and infertile Melian soil to produce exactly the scrub-covered, rocky or sandy wastes that today characterise the island landscape. Hence the lively discussion at the Ecology Conference on how Melos came to lose its "good soils" makes curious reading.

He may well be right, but if so he must have found one of the few places in the world where man has been present for a long time without materially changing the local ecology.

This sort of argument (e.g. that trees could never have grown on the Scilly Isles) has so often proved misleading that one feels that a ha'porth of biological evidence from a contemporary site would be worth more than a pound's worth of reasoned deduction from one line of research. Aridity is not an absolute value; it is relative and can be strongly modified in the micro-climate under a stand of vegetation. (Likewise, I would hesitate to exclude trees on the bases of soil infertility. I know one tree physiologist who told me that it was impossible for trees to grow on a soil of which I gave him a sample. It came from a birch wood.)

Although it is not strongly featured in this work, Bintliff uses site territory analysis in relating sites to their surroundings. This technique, originally devised by E. S. Higgs, is useful in that it makes the

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point that prehistoric sites were not just places where men deposited artifacts, but were directly related to their surroundings, on which the economies depended. In a sense, therefore, this concept rightly breaks down the perhaps artificial distinction I have made between background and site-based evidence. However, we must remember that no site territory is marked out on the ground; it is inferred. Land use is difficult to infer because of the complex of factors that contribute to it, and some of the reservations I expressed above must come in here too. In particular we have to allow for possible changes between the terrain as we see it now and as it might have been in prehistoric times; soil fertility, which depends on ephemeral factors such as humus content or soil structure, is especially difficult to predict.

IN HIS WORK IN GREECE, Bintliff leans heavily on the work of Claudio Vita-Finzi, particularly in his analysis of the valley fills and their ages. Vita-Finzi has just brought out a new book, *Archaeological Sites in their Setting*,[7] and clearly by this title he too is bridging the divide between background analysis and the evidence from sites, though in fact he draws not so much on the sites themselves as on their *situations*. His well-illustrated book covers all periods from the Palaeolithic to Roman, and deals with the changes which have gone on in the physical environment. He discusses changing land levels, whether due to human or natural agency such as tectonic movement, and one is left amazed at the scale of changes he demonstrates. Vita-Finzi, too, uses site territory analysis, acknowledging that it omits the element of living processes, but justifying this on the grounds that they are variable and unpredictable and therefore cannot be taken into account—a conclusion which may be convenient but to my mind reduces the value of the method. It would have been helpful if Vita-Finzi had made it clear in the title of his book that he is dealing only with arid and semi-arid areas; relationships between sites and their setting may be quite different in humid climates. Nevertheless, this book should be of great value to archaeologists practising in mediterranean and other climates with a pronounced dry season. It is significant that in his treatment he deliberately plays down climatic change as a major factor in geomorphological change. This is the factor which first springs to the archaeologist's mind when he sees change of the dimension this book illustrates.

The Council for British Archaeology has just published *The Effect of Man on the Landscape: the Lowland Zone*, edited by Susan Limbrey and J. G. Evans.[8] It is the collected contributions to the second of two conferences organised by the Council (the first, dealing with the Highland Zone, was published in 1975). This second conference was again a meeting point for archaeologists and environmentalists of various disciplines, and the published proceedings give a good opportunity to compare approaches to environmental archaeology. There are 19 papers in all and they fall fairly clearly into three categories: those dealing with what I have called here background studies; those primarily concerned with site studies (taking the word site to include such extended features as field systems); and those which incorporate an element of each of the other two. Some of the papers draw upon purely archaeological material to produce environmental conclusions: Rees, for instance, relates tools and their wear to cultural practices, and Bowen relates "Celtic" field systems and linear ditches to possible types of land use. Most of the authors, however, are reporting on studies made of animal or plant remains, soils and deposits.

It is interesting that only three of these 19 papers deal purely with background evidence. Catt gives an account of the distribution of loess in Britain, Shotton is able to date alluvium in the lower Severn-Avon valleys, and suggests that deposition may be related to prehistoric land use a long distance upstream. Sims produces two detailed pollen diagrams from Norfolk, which provide good evidence of man's use of the land, including clear indications of Mesolithic forest clearance—and remarks that there is no evidence in these profiles of concentrations of ivy (*Hedera*) pollen associated with this clearance, which bears out the point I made above.

One of the most interesting of the site-based studies, by Groenman-van-Waateringe, is a comparative study of pollen spectra from buried Neolithic land surfaces. Mrs Groenman has been able to draw quite complex inferences from these spectra and reach conclusions which, while eminently reasonable, do not accord with more widely accepted models based on conventional pollen analyses. Several of the papers are surveys based on data from archaeological sites, ranging from the Mesolithic (Jacobi) to medieval and later (Taylor). Generally attention is concentrated on one line of evidence, such as the use of insect data by Buckland and by Osborne, but one paper, by Robinson, is remarkable in that it draws upon plant remains, including seeds and pollen, mollusca, Coleoptera and other arthropods, and synthesises their implications with the archaeology of the Iron Age and Roman sites from which they were obtained.

[7] *Archaeological Sites in their Setting*. By CLAUDIO VITA-FINZI. Thames and Hudson, £7.50.

[8] *The Effect of Man on the Landscape: the Lowland Zone*. Edited by SUSAN LIMBREY and J. G. EVANS. Research Report No. 21. Council for British Archaeology, £10.

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The remaining half dozen or so papers in this Report draw upon both background evidence and site evidence indiscriminately. Limbrey, for instance, in her survey of lowland soils, uses analytical evidence from modern soils hand-in-hand with evidence from palaeosols to demonstrate how soil quality has been changed by man, and Evans and his co-workers deduce habitat change from molluscan faunas from prehistoric levels, some naturally and some artificially buried. Two papers on the Somerset levels may be taken together, the one by Coles dealing with archaeological evidence and the one by Hibbert with pollen data from peat profiles; the value of complementary evidence from sites and their settings is again demonstrated in the joint project.

THIS REPORT EPITOMISES the development of environmental archaeology since Zeuner's day. The swing from dating to landscape studies and their economic implications is accompanied by a growth in the variety of evidence which can be drawn upon. In this one publication we have not only the disciplines long standing in this field (geology, pollen analysis, vertebrate osteology and soils) but also others which have sprung up in recent times to become useful tools (entomology, molluscan analysis, seeds and other plant macro-remains, bacteria). In addition man's own handiwork has been made to provide evidence about the environment, the tools he used, the earthworks he built, and the names he gave to places, and we see the coming together of non-archaeological and archaeological lines of enquiry as equal partners in this sort of research. After all, a soil buried beneath an earthwork is just as much a piece of the past preserved as is a layer in a natural organic deposit—and in each case a valid radiocarbon date may be obtained. The archaeological site has come into its own as a source of acceptable environmental evidence. It may pose different problems of explanation and interpretation, but it is to be seen as an additional source of information, not to replace but to augment the more traditional sources.

It is commonly thought that environmental archaeology is the prerogative of specialists and that the archaeologist is not competent to venture into this field. Up to a point this is so. Technical research must be carried out by those technically qualified; many of the papers in *Geological Background to Fossil Man* are based on sophisticated techniques or specialist knowledge and must remain the province of the expert in that field. Even here, however, there must be someone competent to coordinate such work and draw out the implica-

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tions: Mary Leakey can do just this. Dolukhanov is an archaeologist, but has a full grasp of ecology; and Bintliff, also an archaeologist by training, successfully uses all the available evidence from several scientific disciplines that are relevant to his Greek work. In the CBA Report at least half a dozen of the papers are by archaeologists; they too show an ability to understand, coordinate and draw relevant inferences from the scientific data.

Environmental archaeology is moving from being a background study to being an integral part of the discipline of archaeology. Archaeologists have to face this, for they are the people who have the coordinating role. Such a role is not beyond their capabilities, for it has been triumphantly achieved by some of the contributors to the books I have discussed, some of them senior men, others at the start of their careers. Nevertheless, this development has some fundamental implications for the way we train archaeologists today.

Moral Amusements

Victorian England—By ASA BRIGGS

GRADUATE STUDENTS in universities may be turning increasingly to 20th-century themes, but most of their teachers—and many free-lance writers—are still happy in the 19th century. Frank Huggett's *Victorian England as seen by Punch*, for example, is as old as the Victorians themselves, and similar tasks to that which he sets himself have often been done before. John Roach's *Social Reform in England* also covers much familiar ground, while drawing sensibly on recent scholarship. By contrast, Angus McLaren's monograph *Birth Control in Nineteenth Century England* deals with topics which were once taboo, and Peter Bailey's *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* turns to "popular culture" in what is rapidly becoming a new tradition. Once it was the Victorian gospel of work which most interested social historians: now it is their patterns of leisure. Events in the 20th century have doubtless been responsible for this shift of concern. It is our leisure problems—and opportunities—in the last decades of this century which have encouraged historians to look back. Indeed, in this particular field of study graduate students in universities are leading the way and they care little about which century they are writing about.

The Marquess of Londonderry is neither a professional academic nor a free-lance historian. In many ways, however, his brief introduction to *The Londonderry Album*[1] raises the most pertinent points about changing preoccupations and angles of approach. The photographs in the *Album* represent what is now being called "visual history", and it and oral history are both thriving. For the time being the formal document is out: even the ephemera matter more. The photographs in the *Album* were taken by Lord Reginald Stewart and his mother Lady Theresa Londonderry, wife of the sixth Marquess, a great beauty and a well-known political hostess, born in 1855: they are mainly family portraits with a few landscapes and interiors thrown in (not to speak of a picture of the Londonderry Locomotive Engine which ran on a line from Seaham to Sunderland which was private until 1900).

There is a certain "other Victorians" (or perhaps televisual) interest in the fact that Lord Reginald's father was not the sixth Marquess and may have been the Prince of Wales. More remarkable, however, is the fact that the ninth Marquess, who has written the introduction, lived for nearly 30 years at Wynyard, the family's ancestral home, without knowing that this "treasure trove" of photographs existed. They were in a perfectly preserved Victorian dark-room, and it was only by chance that he came to hear of it. As a result, he felt a wonderful sense of discovery, discovery of what had long been lost, if not forgotten, and he writes as eloquently about what he found there as Brian Moore wrote in his 1975 novel *The Great Victorian Collection*. The obstacles to discovering the room for so long were lost keys and vertigo: the staircase led to a dome high over the statue gallery. There is a fascinating symbolism about this. So there is also about the brooding presence of Reginald who died in 1899 a few months before the end of the century.

> The crutches in the corner, the wooden box bearing his name, the piece of mineral stone, the letter, all these signs indicate that the dark room was his domain.

An 1899 newspaper letter from a Seaham Harbour man, who had known Reginald all his life, included the sentence

[1] *The Londonderry Album: Portraits from a Great House in the 1890s.* Introduction by the MARQUESS of LONDONDERRY. Blond & Briggs, £8.95.

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I always held the idea that if Nature had provided a healthy and robust body for his soul to live in, he would have had a brilliant future before him.

NATURE—AND HOW the Victorians regarded it—is the theme of *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*,[2] one of the most interesting and most important books in this selection. Twenty-four distinguished writers across the Atlantic, still a great home of Victorian studies, begin with reproductions of photographs also. The first "photo-essay" by Charles Millard is called "The Mind's Eye" and deals with "images of Nature": the photographs are more interesting than those in the Londonderry Collection, but it is not easy to accept uncritically Mr Millard's explanation of them. The suggestion that there was a basic change in photography after the 1880s—so that the word "Victorian" can no longer be applied to it—requires far fuller elucidation. The second section of the book—"The Taming of Space"—begins with a characteristically lively and sensitive study by George H. Ford called "Felicitous Space: the Cottage Controversy." The cottage was as far removed socially and visually from houses like Londonderry's Wynyard as it could be within a rural context. Yet both cottage and great house, when compared with the buildings of the new industrial city, had their rose bushes and their hollyhocks; and, as George Eliot wrote of one simple homestead, Freeman's End, an observer "under that softening influence of the fine arts which make other people's hardships picturesque" might have been delighted with it. Professor Ford is right to suggest that when a Victorian (or at least a mid-Victorian, it should be added) closed his eyes to daydream, "what flashed upon his inward eye was a blissful sense of a green valley in which was nestled a scattered group of thatch-roofed cottages." Certainly for every hundred Victorian paintings of a cottage there are only a dozen of great houses and one, at most, of a textile mill or a warehouse.

In his essay on "Imagination in the Suburb" Walter L. Creese treats changing attitudes towards "Nature" on the periphery of the great cities. In the suburb there was not to be one great house but a multitude of houses, "a set of discrete assertions", and each house would prove that it could contain "all that is essential to happiness, in the garden,

[2] *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*. Edited by U. C. KNOEPFLMACHER and G. B. TENNYSON. University of California Press, $25.00, £15.00.

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park and demesne of the most extensive country residence." This is a thoughtful and completely convincing essay, sprinkled with memorable quotations like the painter Edwin Abbey's remark that when he walked through Bedford Park he felt that he was walking through a water colour. The *St. James Gazette* caught the impression:

> *And Abbey (he, the artist,*
> *Malicious little wretch)*
> *Said it made him feel like walking*
> *Through a water-colour sketch.*

M. H. Baillie Scott, one of a group of decorators described by Ellen Frank in her essay on five houses in the Lake District, wanted interior decoration to have something of the same effect. On entering a room with walls,

> peopled with dim figures, with trees, with fruit, flowers and flowing streams . . . one will become a member of its goodly company, wandering in imagination by stream and grove in a land where flowers always bloom and fruits hang ripe on the bough.

IF THESE WERE SOME of the more sentimental Victorian attitudes to Nature, what of "Human Nature" and the people who lived in such settings? "Nature" had blighted Lord Vane-Tempest-Stewart. Yet it could also console and redeem. In an exploratory essay on "The Interior Garden and John Stuart Mill", closely related to a brilliant later essay by Professor Knoepflmacher on "Mutations of the Wordsworthian Child of Nature", Andrew Griffin starts with Wordsworth's belief, which influenced—and consoled—so many early Victorians, that "Nature" meant a return of feeling, a return, indeed, of self. By the end of the period, he concludes—and the argument is perhaps rather over-stated—"the inmost self" could not be discovered in this way. The necessary process involved what Mill called "the cultivation of the feelings", something different from absorption either in the wilderness or the garden. Mill, indeed, had his "interior garden", protected from others, just as Lord Reginald had his dark-room. Later in the century Wordsworth was criticised on other grounds, by Matthew Arnold for example, in predating the love of nature and treating it as a childhood experience. ("Perhaps with the majority of educated persons the love of nature is nearly imperceptible at ten years old, but strong and operative at thirty." If this sounds like the Inspector of Schools speaking, Ruskin said the same.) In the 20th century, T. S. Eliot referred, in 1936, to "that strange abstraction, Nature", but went on to write some of the most moving nature poetry of his time.

The academic investigation of "Nature" in the 19th century—that made by chemists or biologists, for example—contributed little to any understanding of such personal processes or of the eddies of fashion. Yet there were changes in attitudes to Nature among men of science also as they moved from versions of the natural theology of design to a narrower search for "rules by which we can tell more or less accurately what will be the consequences of a given state of things." "Our hypotheses", J. H. Poynting insisted in 1899, "are in terms of ourselves rather than in terms of Nature itself." An essay on inventors, engineers and industrialists, many of whom were seeking at least in the early and middle Victorian years to "tame" physical "Nature", would have been an interesting complement to David Wilson's "Concepts of Physical Nature." They are surprisingly ignored in this collection of essays, even though some of them, at least, believed that they were changing not only the environmental context but people's ways of thinking and feeling. Imagination was at play here as well as effort. R. H. Super touches on the point, but only very briefly. Incidentally, if there is no reference to pertinent technological periodicals like *Engineering* (and only one, and that on a quite different subject, to Samuel Smiles) there is only one in the text to the periodical *Nature* itself. In the opening number of *Nature* T. H. Huxley defined the process of science as "the progress of that fashioning by Nature of a picture of herself in the mind of man." How far did *Nature* qualify or extend the definition? Huxley himself went back in the manner of Darwin to the origins. But there were other "nature" themes, too, some of them dealt with in 1970 by R. M. Young in his *Mind, Brain and Adaptation in the Nineteenth Century*, others still inadequately explored, leading into "eugenics."

TAKING THIS COLLECTION of essays as a whole, the Nature/Art themes and the Nature/Religion themes are those handled best. There are some beautiful illustrations, and W. F. Axton's "Victorian Landscape Painting: A Change in Outlook" is rich and rewarding where Charles Millard is spare and frustrating. If there is a best essay, it is probably George P. Landow's on "The Rainbow", which takes Atkinson Grimshaw's painting of a rainbow, now in the city of Leeds Art Gallery, as an example of the treatment of Nature as "sacramental" and goes on to consider how and why this treatment changed. Even in its time, there were uncertainties of response surrounding the title Grimshaw gave to it—"The Seal of the Covenant" —which was out of line also with "what had come to be dominant expectations about landscape painting." Grimshaw's was not personal symbolism, like Blake's, embedded though that was

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in other lore: it was the symbolism of the Religious Tract Society. The explicit and extreme religious claims Grimshaw's title made provoked uneasiness in artistic circles. They might have done so earlier, for Shelley had indicated not the hope behind the appearance of the rainbow, but the forlornness when it disappeared so rapidly. There was no Seal. For Turner, to see Nature's rainbow as an emblem of hope was itself one of the great fallacies of hope.

THERE IS ONE DISSENTING ESSAY in this admirable collection, which also includes two striking essays, again magnificently illustrated, by Chauncey Loomis on "The Arctic Solstice" and by David Robertson on "Mid-Victorians Amongst the Alps." J. Hillis Miller questions the "primary interest" of the Victorians in "Nature" and considers their response to be "indirect, at least in literature." Some of the other essays seem to prove him wrong, yet he has a point, which he illustrates from a number of novels, notably *Wuthering Heights*.

> Nature [he says of this novel] is no more than a major resource of figurative language by means of which the quality of the people and their relations is defined.

It is not easy to go as far as he does in relation to this novel or to his general thesis, the approach of which is in marked contrast to the interdisciplinary approaches of some of the other essays. "Literature is distinguished from other uses of language by the explicitness of its orientation towards language rather than by thematic concern for Nature and Selfhood." What is "literature"? Why use such a forceful "rather than"? It is sensible to urge, as he does, that the "mimetic referentiality" of literature should cease to be taken for granted, but there are practical ways of studying themes and contexts which remain illuminating and which bring both the general historian and the art historian into a close relationship with the literary critic. Hillis Miller's definition of his own essay and the other essays in the book as "the bringing together, with some teasing out of implications, of a series of citations, passages, places in a passage through which, in each case, the current of meaning found in longer works momentarily pauses or traverses" is too narrow. And Professor Landow rightly and very explicitly widens the terms of reference with a quotation from Sir Ernst Gombrich that "it is in the nature of things that images need more of a context to be unambiguous than do statements . . . the means of visual art cannot match the statement function of language."

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TO TURN AWAY FROM *Nature and the Victorian Imagination* to John Lowerson's and John Myerscough's *Time to Spare in Victorian England*[3] and the longer and more ambitious book by Peter Bailey on *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*[4] is to move into manageable territory, even if much of it still has not been explored. Nature, which is not much touched upon in either of them—and this is a mistake—certainly meant relatively little to the visitors to the Duke of Cleveland's great house and gardens at Battle Abbey in Sussex. "They come in all seasons, and I may add, in all weathers", wrote the Duchess in 1872. "The favourite excursion was into the Park; not, I am sorry to say, with any idea of examining the field of battle [and note that she, too, said nothing of the trees], but simply to eat and drink." These were the day visitors, "only too glad to have something to do and somewhere to go." The Duchess's neighbour at Normanhurst, a new house built for the son of England's richest contractor, Thomas Brassey, came in for more cultural criticism.

> The new man in his new house [was] surrounded by new plantations in the midst of grounds treeless but for them, as if to prove how slowly, at whatever expenditure of money, a place can be created. But the situation is good, the view fine, and time alone is needed for its improvement.

THERE ARE GOOD PHOTOGRAPHS in this bright little book also, which must have made good listening when it was delivered *in situ* in talks on Radio Brighton. "The faces and poses of some of the characters in the photographs reproduced in this book may look stilted and arrogant", the authors warn their readers at the beginning. Yet they include dancing in the street at Hastings and school theatricals at Hurstpierpoint. The stratified nature of Victorian leisure—though there were some leisure activities which crossed class boundaries—comes out clearly in these photographs and in some of the verbal descriptions, notably the account of Brighton given by Arnold Bennett's Edwin Clayhanger. This was as far removed from Professor Ford's mid-Victorian dream of cottages in the valley as Wynyard was. Indeed, for Clayhanger "it corresponded with no dream. It was vaster than any imagining of it. Edwin had only seen the pleasure cities of the poor and of the middling, such as Blackpool and Llandudno. He had not conceived what wealth would do when it organised itself for the purpose of distraction." The picture is only fully meaningful if Brighton is considered alongside Burslem, and even then, as Bennett himself noted in other places, it was not a complete picture of Brighton. There was, nonetheless, throughout the 19th century an organisation of wealth "for the purpose of distraction", although it was always subject to restraints and to controls.

Myerscough and Lowerson draw a sharp distinction between the "respectable" and the "rough", which countermanded the divisions between classes. But in between—and something different from both—were those citizens in pursuit of a quest for comfort. Burckhardt worried about the destruction of civilisation in an age of comfortable trans-European sleeping-cars, and there were other, and easier, ways out of crowded England than those leading to the Arctic or to the summits of Burckhardt's Alps. For those who were too poor to chase comfort, glamour could take its place, as it did in the developing 19th-century pub, where, as Dickens put it, splendour could be "in precise proportion to the dirt and poverty of the surrounding neighbourhood." I would like to have seen more about glamour—and magic—in both leisure books, just as I would like to have seen more about the supernatural in *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*. The cinema, which was to generate new images for the 20th century and new expressions of glamour, cannot be fully understood without considering glamour and magic in the 19th century.

THIS IS A THEME not treated by Peter Bailey although there is much of interest in his book, particularly when he draws on evidence from one place, Bolton, which he, like Mass Observation after him, has studied in detail. Yet there is too much jargon, congealing the subject and sparing both author and reader from new thinking. Thus, leisure is considered a "suspect quantity in bourgeois ideology", Professor Bailey writes.

> In a work-orientated value system leisure represented the irresponsible preoccupation of a parasitic ruling class or the reckless carousing of an irrational working class. Though the bourgeoisie had nonetheless at times been enamoured of the aristocratic style, the clash of political and economic interests and the strictures of the evangelical revival had greatly reduced its attractions during the early-Victorian period.

Was there one bourgeois ideology? At what time and why had the bourgeoisie been enamoured of the aristocratic style? *How* greatly had the forces at work in the early Victorian period changed the position? Does the language used by Professor

[3] *Time to Spare in Victorian England.* By JOHN LOWERSON and JOHN MYERSCOUGH. Harvester Press, £5.50

[4] *Leisure and Class in Victorian England.* By PETER BAILEY. Routledge, £5.75.

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Bailey correspond at all to the perceptions of the time? Even the word "bourgeois" jolts.

His analysis suffers also from an inability to look backwards. We start with the industrial town of the 1840s. Yet there was certainly a vigorous "bourgeois" leisure culture during the early years of the industrial revolution, when many new activities and institutions were launched. Robert Malcolmson's book on the 18th century, cited in the bibliography and mentioned in the Introduction, makes a better point of reference, though that too has its limitations. Fortunately, the early contours of the subject are now being re-examined by J. H. Plumb.

FOR THE PERCEPTIONS of the time, though often in the form of caricatures rather than of photographs, it is helpful to go back to Dickens. In more than one place Dickens expressed his interest (in speeches and letters as well as in novels) in extending and enhancing leisure. English operatives were "the hardest-worked" (note the passive) in the world. Yet given the chance, they were as capable of enjoying themselves as the most traditional aristocracy. Norris Pope does not deal at length with such matters in his neat and informative *Dickens and Charity*[5] which, as he says, should be placed alongside Philip Collins's *Dickens and Crime* and *Dickens and Education*. His first two chapters probe more deeply than Professor Bailey, however, into two aspects of the leisure issue—Evangelicalism and the Defence of the Sabbath. Professor Pope writes well and sticks closely to his theme, always allowing Dickens to speak directly across the centuries as he spoke to the Sabbatarians of his time:

> You hold out no inducement, you offer no relief from listlessness, you provide nothing to amuse his mind, you afford him no means of exercising his body.... He flies to the gin-shop as his only resource; and when, reduced to a worse level than the lowest brute in the scale of creation, he lies wallowing in the kennel, your saintly lawgivers lift up their hands to heaven, and exclaim for a law which shall convert the day intended for rest and cheerfulness into one of universal gloom, bigotry and persecution.

Drunkenness was thought of as an effect rather than a cause by Dickens, and he would have nothing to do with middle-class prudery. He delighted in the kind of scene that could horrify others—"Pipes are smoked; liquors mixed with hot water are drunk; shrimps are eaten; cockles are

[5] *Dickens and Charity*. By NORRIS POPE. Macmillan Press, £3.95.

CITY IN THE DESERT

Oleg Grabar, Reneta Holod, James Knustad and William Trousdale

The ruins of Qasr al-Hayr are located almost exactly in the centre of Syria, between the Euphrates and the ancient city of Palmyra. Founded around 825 AD by the Dynasty of the Umayyads, the settlement continued to flourish until the 12th century. The results of the excavation of this extraordinary Islamic site—carried out by the Kelsey Museum, University of Michigan, and Harvard University—are described in these two volumes. At once palatial and nomadic, rural and urban in character, Qasr al-Hayr mirrored many social and cultural aspects of the medieval Islamic world and presents many puzzles that the authors seek to solve. *Harvard Middle East Monographs, 23 & 24.* Two volume set, published January 1979, £31.50.

LYDIAN HOUSES and ARCHITECTURAL TERRACOTTAS

Andrew Ramage

Sixteen years of excavation and study by the Harvard-Cornell archaeological expedition in Sardis have uncovered the houses and shops of ordinary Lydian city dwellers and have thrown much light on their daily life. The author describes these structures and what they show about the society that produced them. He deals extensively with a striking aspect of Lydian architecture, the decorated terracotta tiles, and the 132 illustrations include some of the most attractive and famous pieces found in the Sardis excavation. *Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, 5.* To be published shortly, £9.80.

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consumed; tea is swilled; ginger beer is loudly exploded." This is certainly a mid-Victorian picture which no painter quite captured (although the best *Punch* cartoons, some of which are reproduced by Frank Huggett in *Victorian England as Seen by Punch*,[6] could often do so). There were moments, indeed, when Dickens feared that religious tracts would annihilate imaginative literature, an interesting fear which could not be examined fully within the narrow terms Professor Hillis Miller suggests for the study of literature—"philology, rhetoric, an investigation of the epistemology of tropes."

When the great Evangelical leader, Lord Shaftesbury, tried to sum up Dickens, he resorted in the first instance to Nature rather than to history or to religion. "The man was a phenomenon; an exception, a special production. Nothing like him ever preceded. Nature isn't such a tautologist as to make another to follow him." There was an immensely human touch, however, in the remark that followed. "Strange to say, he never gave me a helping hand—at least I never heard of it." Professor Pope rightly reserves this remark for his last page. A careful reading of the six chapters which make up his book—and there is a particularly good one on "Missions and Missionaries"—enables the reader to understand why such a remark could be made. It would require another six chapters, however, to explain why it was framed in such non-Providential language.

THE HELPING HAND figures in John Roach's study of *Social Reform in England, 1780–1880*[7] along with "the growth of central power." Yet he provides no references to Dickens or to the issues covered in Peter Bailey's book. It is interesting to consider in this context a statement of W. S. Jevons in 1878, quoted by Professor Bailey, that there was hardly any other method of social reform taken separately to which greater importance should be attached than "the providing of good moral public amusements." The work of the leisure historians should certainly encourage future textbook writers on "social reform" (as controversial a subject these days as "Nature") to include a chapter on "rational recreation." There is another quotation in Professor Bailey's book which should be taken over by textbook writers also. In what other age could anyone write

> Recreation is, or ought to be, not a pastime entered upon for the sake of pleasure it affords, but an act of duty undertaken for the sake of the subsequent power which it generates, and the subsequent profit which it ensures.

The writer was G. J. Romanes, who still is remembered in the distinguished lectures given in his name, and the date was 1879. The "culture of pleasure" was deplored even in Oxford.

HOW MUCH HAD THE DEBATE on birth control to do with "pleasure"? In *Birth Control in 19th-Century England*,[8] Angus McLaren, like Professor Bailey a Canadian historian, argues that there was never any "pure ideology in favour of or in opposition to birth control", but he has no chapter on religion. He refers to the subject on a few occasions, but never mentions the Roman Catholics or the Irish. The omission seems to have been quite deliberate, for he states in his Introduction that while he started his research with the thought of perusing church records, he soon discovered that "the Church" had stayed outside the debate in order "not to arouse the ingrained hostility of the masses against any clerical meddling in domestic affairs." Can this really be the reason, when, as all the other books in this Victorian selection suggest, there was so much "meddling" in everything else, including the recreations of the home? Professor

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[6] *Victorian England as Seen by Punch*. By FRANK E. HUGGETT. Sidgwick & Jackson, £6.95.

[7] *Social Reform in England, 1780–1880*. By JOHN ROACH. Batsford, £12.50.

[8] *Birth Control in 19th-Century England*. By ANGUS MCLAREN. Croom Helm, £8.95.

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McLaren is doubtless right to insist that "contraception had a dual potential: it could have been an instrument for greater freedom or it could have permitted greater social control", but he does not fully explore the implications of his own remark. Nor does he refer to Nature. You could support Birth Control (particularly after 1900) because it could convey eugenic benefits—and Professor McLaren has an interesting chapter on this area of the argument—but you could oppose it because it was "against Nature." The remarkable fact is that in a century of immense change it seems to have been pre-industrial forms of fertility control, including abortion, rather than new contraceptive devices which brought the birth rate down and thereby influenced both leisure and work at their source—in the family.

NO VICTORIAN SELECTION would be complete without a book on Christmas, the great family festival with a religious source. It is enterprising of the Harvester Press to have discovered and published J. A. R. Pimlott's *The Englishman's Christmas*,[9] written almost 20 years ago. Pimlott was a civil servant who wrote social history before the great boom began, and this book is a worthy sequel to *The Englishman's Holiday*, published in 1947, when historians were leaving "leisure" to pulpit preachers and to ageing sociologists like Seebohm Rowntree. There is one chapter in *The Englishman's Christmas*, called "Victorian Miscellany", in which Pimlott picks up many of the odd ends. By 1890 *The Spectator* could write that "the season associated with gladness has become universally distasteful . . . Christmas would not be Christmas, if many people had felt about it formerly what we may almost say everybody feels about it now." And by then Dickens was felt to be out of fashion, a further reminder of how difficult it is to generalise about Victorian England as a whole. "The age which sneers at Dickens", G. R. Sims observed, "cannot be expected to go out of its way to keep alive his particular invention."

[9] *The Englishman's Christmas*. By J. A. R. PIMLOTT. Harvester Press, £5.95.

Piecing Together the Present

Archaeology in Theory & Practice—By DAVID MILES

"ARCHAEOLOGY IS AN UNDISCIPLINED empirical discipline. A discipline lacking a scheme of systematic and ordered study based upon declared and clearly defined models and rules of procedure."

With the opening words of his *Analytical Archaeology* (1968) David Clarke threw down the theoretical gauntlet before a largely apathetic archaeological world. The effect could almost have been described as galvanising. If not tidal waves then at least considerable ripples disturbed the placid face of British archaeology. Ten years after its conception in the United States the new archaeology had crossed the Atlantic and arrived in the Old World.

1968 was a high-water mark for the new archaeologists. In the US a collection of papers appeared entitled *New Perspectives in Archaeology*, co-edited by Sally Binford and by Lewis Binford, high priest, Godfather, or general of the movement: 1968 was a terrible year for mixed metaphors.

The new archaeologists were brash, arrogant, interesting and optimistic, and usually better at rhetoric than at writing. They challenged the fundamental assumptions of archaeology; they demanded that the subject become empirical, numerate, scientific. Binford and his colleagues had been proselytising since the late 1950s, but their thoughts had appeared in relatively short and ignorable articles: *Analytical Archaeology* in contrast was massive, authoritative, and demanding of attention. The book had an immediate and widespread impact. It became (in archaeological terms) a best-seller and inaugurated a level of debate which the subject had not seen before. Within a year another book with an identical title had appeared in Turkey,[1] providing an unfashionable example for the diffusionists.

To a minority of the faithful *Analytical Archaeology* might have been written on Mount Sinai but for the majority, in Britain certainly, the new archaeology movement in general and this book in particular were anathema. In answer to some of his critics Clarke modestly said that his message

> was mainly one of stimulus rather than one embodying retrospective information describing established events, since the theory of archaeology nowhere exists in an integrated, sophisticated or comprehensive form. The main

[1] A. M. Dinçol and S. Karitman (eds.), *Analitik arkeologi* (1969).

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> intention was therefore to sketch how such a theory was not only possible but essential and how such a theory might emerge from the disconnected and piecemeal arrival of a wide array of interdisciplinary techniques and procedures currently impinging upon archaeology.[2]

HIS ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE a core of universal theory was a brave one—a refreshing dose of optimism after a period in which archaeologists had tended to emphasise the limitations of their evidence. But there were problems which even friendly reviewers pointed out. The emphasis was on artefacts and their objective mathematical processing; a case of letting the evidence speak for itself. Other important aspects such as social structuring, trade, and the analysis of biological material were largely ignored. Clarke was eager to emphasise the autonomy of archaeology; it should not be simply a handmaiden of history or of anthropology. In doing so he was in danger of restricting archaeology within a purely analytical framework.

Archaeology sometimes seems a magpie of a subject, lifting techniques and methods from other sciences in a bewildering variety. *Analytical Archaeology* illustrated this tendency very clearly, and Clarke rightly made a virtue of isomorphism. Generating models by borrowing and modifying from other disciplines can be a fruitful activity, but for such eclecticism to work the archaeological relevance needs to be clearly demonstrated with concrete examples. In *Analytical Archaeology* this was not always the case.

In attempting to drag archaeology into the mainstream of scientific thought Clarke allowed himself to wallow in a swamp of jargon—words culled from statistics, computer science, cybernetics, geography. This was probably the most serious shortcoming of the book and of the new archaeologists in general. Many of them wrote in a peculiarly pretentious American academic style, reminiscent of a bad translation from the German. Add a lacing of technical jargon—and the whole conception was like a red rag to virtuous defenders of the Queen's English. In some books this could be merely an unfortunate distraction from the main core of the argument, but with *Analytical Archaeology* it was a major flaw, and what Colin Renfrew called its "almost complete opacity of style" severely limited its influence. Clarke had aimed to stimulate archaeologists to more rigorous methods and to an awareness of their own underlying assumptions: the theory should act as the cement which binds all archaeologists together. Much of the turbulence the book caused was at the surface only—a non-random but fairly extensive personal poll of archaeologists of my own generation and younger showed that almost everyone owned a copy but very few had read much of it.

Ten years after the book's first appearance (and two years after the tragically premature death of its author in 1976), the publishers have produced a second edition, revised by Bob Chapman.[3] For one who was an archaeology undergraduate in the late '60s this book brings back the atmosphere of a period of confrontation and idealism; when Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band was the noise, the Chicago convention the image, and this book the stick with which hapless and long-suffering lecturers were chastised. The new edition has been slimmed down by some 140 pages from the original. The remainder has been improved by the removal of some repetition, the addition of more up-to-date diagrams and references, and Bob Chapman's useful but brief notes at the end of each chapter. Understandably Chapman did not wish to tamper too much with Clarke's great work, and as a result the general difficulties of language remain.

The second half of the first edition—"Methods of Analysis"—has wisely been discarded. This gallop through model building, spatial analysis, computing and statistics was the most unsatisfactory part of *Analytical Archaeology* and it has been overtaken by more recent work, much of it inspired by Clarke himself.[4] He emphasised for example the possibilities for archaeology of the ideas of locational analysis developed by the geographer Peter Haggett, and this has proved a rich vein. The most recent book from this school, *The Spatial Organisation of Culture*, edited by Ian Hodder,[5] shows the maturing of Clarke's concept in an archaeological framework: the magpie is beginning to construct something useful from the glittering trinkets of other disciplines. Especially satisfying is the integration of this branch of archaeology with anthropology.

IN AMERICA, in contrast with Europe, archaeology developed within the study of anthropology, and much of the outcry of new archaeologists was in response to the feeling that archaeology in the States had become the poor relation of the social sciences. The respect for the senior, umbrella discipline is probably reflected in

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[2] D. L. Clarke, "Reply to the comments on *Analytical Archaeology*", *Norwegian Archaeological Review* (1970).

[3] *Analytical Archaeology*. By DAVID CLARKE. Second Edition. Revised by BOB CHAPMAN. Methuen, £12.95, paper £7.95.

[4] For example: D. L. Clarke (ed.), *Models in Archaeology* (1972); C. Renfrew (ed.), *The Explanation of Culture Change: Models in Prehistory* (1973); J. E. Doran and F. R. Hodson, *Mathematics and Computers in Archaeology* (1975); I. Hodder and C. Orton, *Spatial Analysis in Archaeology* (1976).

[5] *The Spatial Organisation of Culture*. Edited by IAN HODDER. Duckworth, £14.

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the recent tendency for published conference papers of archaeologists to be summed up by an eminent anthropologist. This tends to involve the dashing of cold water on the optimism of the presumptuous young archaeologists and a lecture on how they should be doing what anthropologists do, preferably in a structuralist framework. But the procedures are different[6] and the archaeologist needs to develop his own means of cracking physical as opposed to verbal evidence. Living or recent communities can hold one of the keys, but anthropologists have not necessarily been looking for it in their traditional activities. The present can throw light on the past if the right questions are asked of it, and *The Spatial Organisation of Culture* reflects the new willingness of archaeologists to gather anthropological data for their own purposes. As the editor, Ian Hodder, says "there are few ethnographic studies which explicitly examine the spatial structure of interaction in primitive societies." The studies published here on such subjects as the use and distribution of stone tools among recent communities in New Guinea or pottery in Guatemala and Ghana may appear specialised, even particularist, but the implications are enormous. The ability to identify the source of materials such as obsidian, stone for axes, and pottery has stimulated a much more sophisticated level of discussion on concepts of prehistoric and early historic trade. Talk of reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange is all very well, but while anthropologists have been able to see these things in practice, few people have previously tried to find out what they look like in terms of the spatial distribution of objects and to construct models with relevance for the study of the past.

The implications of this work are also important for the quite rightly abused archaeological concept of "culture"—what Gordon Childe defined as "an assemblage of associated traits that recur repeatedly." The concept has for many years been considered too simple and in many cases as providing an archaeological red herring. The practical study of the Bell Beaker culture by Shennan in *Spatial Organisation of Culture*, using quantitative methods, and the theoretical attack by Colin Renfrew may together provide its *coup de grâce*. Both are powerful pleas for the rigorous study of the interaction of subsystems.

WITH ITS EMPHASIS on artefacts (the traditional units of archaeological currency), *Analytical Archaeology* showed less concern for other major

[6] As emphasised by Colin Renfrew's article "Space, time and polity" in another important collection of papers, *The Evolution of Social Systems*. Edited by J. FRIEDMAN & M. J. ROWLANDS. Duckworth, £24.

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problems facing the student of the past, and particularly for the study of settlements and the integration of biological or environmental evidence. Landscape archaeology has a long and honourable tradition in Britain, going back to the 17th century and antiquaries such as John Aubrey. Both popular and academic interest in the landscape were given a great boost by the publication of W. G. Hoskins' classic of historical geography, *The Making of the English Landscape*, in 1955, and in recent years there has been an avalanche of books on this subject, devoted to regions, counties or countries. Some of the most useful have been general surveys of familiar but previously neglected subjects—fields, towns, woods, and most recently villages and place-names.[7] (Often, though, we are treated to old ideas in new dust-jackets.)

The utilisation of radiocarbon dating, pollen analysis, and aerial photography have shown that man's influence on the landscape was more extensive and much earlier than previously thought. There have been inter-disciplinary success stories, notably in the cooperation of Grahame Clark and Harry Godwin at Cambridge which resulted in the model excavations at the mesolithic site of Star Carr and the Royal Geographical Society's study of the Roman Fenland. Unfortunately the obvious lessons were not learned by the archaeological world in general.

The shortcomings of the evidence we have are illustrated in Richard Bradley's *The Prehistoric Settlement of Britain*.[8] Packed with facts and showing an enviable familiarity with a vast bibliography, its tendency to read like a card-index is as much the fault of the raw material as of the author. Bradley is attempting to pull together a hotch-potch of badly collected data, the result of a widespread lack of research aims in excavation and palaeo-ecology. They reveal only too clearly that facts do not speak for themselves, even when as enterprising a prehistorian as Bradley gets hold of them. Nevertheless his attempt to translate palaeo-biological evidence into economic prehistory is a most welcome one.

[7] *Villages in the Landscape*. By TREVOR ROWLEY. Archaeology in the Field Series. J. M. Dent, £5.95. *Signposts to the Past: Place-names and the History of England*. By MARGARET GELLING. J. M. Dent, £6.50. Typical of the historical geography school is *Man and the Landscape in Ireland*. By F. H. A. AALEN. Academic Press, £9.60.

[8] *The Prehistoric Settlement of Britain*. By RICHARD BRADLEY. Routledge, £7.75. Bradley's task is made more difficult by the lack of an up-to-date synthesis of prehistoric Britain before the Iron Age. *The Bronze Age in Europe* (By J. M. COLES and A. F. HARDING. Methuen, £18, paper £9.95) provides a major textbook for Europe as a whole. At a more popular level is *Prehistoric Europe* (By D. W. HARDING. Elsevier-Phaidon, £4.95), which is superbly illustrated but far from comprehensive.

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THE LACK OF A THEORETICAL CORE in this area is reflected at the organisational level. Archaeologists deservedly have a bad reputation among the botanists and zoologists they call on to identify their samples. Mostly these "specialists" are resorted to as an ill-considered afterthought, their reports tagged on as an embarrassing appendix, or not published at all. The same attitude shows in the present government organisation of environmental archaeology in Britain: biologist and soil scientists providing an over-the-counter identification service instead of being fully integrated into regional field projects and contributing to excavation research design.

The potential for the study of the past is enormous. There has been a quantitative explosion on several levels: the possibilities opened by the use of mathematical techniques, the sheer numbers of sites that are now known or suspected, the vast increase in the range of evidence that can be extracted from those sites. But there is still a tendency in practice for archaeologists to see a site as something rare and unique, and archaeology in Britain often means excavation of a site in isolation. The Society of Antiquaries and the Council for British Archaeology have launched or expressed pious support for landscape projects which aimed at studying regions in terms of the total distribution of sites, their hierarchy, and their social organisation, but on the whole these seem to have languished for lack of funds. And the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments continues to carry out skilled surveys of "monuments" county by county. Their volumes are masterpieces of the publisher's art, but remain curiously Victorian.

Ironically, while fieldwork has languished in Britain itself, in Italy the British School at Rome has carried out a massive survey of Southern Etruria over the past 25 years. T. W. Potter's *The Changing Landscape of South Etruria*[9] is a lucid guide to the type of regional project which should (but rarely does) form the basis of all landscape studies. In 1950 land reforms resulted in large areas of Etruria coming under the plough for the first time since Classical times; vast numbers of archaeological sites became visible in the arable soil as they were eroded and destroyed. The Director of the British School, John Ward Perkins, wisely opted to put his research students on to extensive survey rather than concentrating all his resources on the excavation of one or two spectacular sites. The Etruria project has taken a long time but it has laid the foundation for future problem-orientated excavation in a way that has rarely been done elsewhere.

[9] *The Changing Landscape of South Etruria*. By T. W. POTTER. Elek, £8.95.

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THE NEED TO SURVEY massive regions, preferably in less than a quarter of a century, and to process the vast quantity of material from large-scale excavations has prompted American archaeologists to pay serious attention to rigorous sampling methods. The subject has at last received an airing in Britain in *Sampling in Contemporary British Archaeology*,[10] a useful and stimulating volume but one which illustrates, by its shortage of examples, the lack of previous work. Sampling has become an emotive issue in archaeology, causing its conservative head to rear up and roar at this fresh invasion of supposedly mechanistic anti-humanists. But the logic presented in this book is undeniable. Where there is land by the hundreds of square kilometres to be fieldwalked, sites by the tens of hectares to be excavated, artefacts and biological material by the tonne to be analysed and selected for storage, some sort of sampling is inevitable and in that case it might as well be the explicit sort.

The increase in the scale of archaeological evidence over the past ten years has largely been due to the expansion of rescue archaeology. The practice of archaeology, or at least excavation, in Britain has moved away from universities and museums to government-funded excavation Units. The thousand percent increase in government expenditure came about largely as a result of the heat generated in the early 1970s by Rescue, British archaeology's arm of the environmental movement. Increase in quantity has not, unfortunately, been reflected by an increase in quality. The rescue or salvage ethic meant that sites were selected for excavation because they were threatened by some form of development. The general idea seemed to be that like a box they could be opened to reveal their contents, but all too often they seemed to contain only a booby prize. The situation was, and to a considerable extent remains, reminiscent of Clyde Kluckhohn's famous criticism of American archaeology in the 1940s:

> "I should like to record an overwhelming impression that many students . . . are but slightly reformed antiquaries. To one who is a layman in these realms there seems a great deal of obsessive wallowing in detail of and for itself . . . proliferation of minutiae is not its own justification."

The frantic fire-fighting mentality of British archaeology in the early 1970s created a parallel crusading cause to the new archaeology. In Britain and the United States the two sides seemed to polarise into opposing breeds: "rugged archaeologists" or "young fogeys" *vs* the ivory tower theoreticians whose most strenuous form of activity was lifting Duckworth tomes from the bookshelf. Petty schisms and lack of understanding between traditionalists, "rescue" archaeologists, and the new theorists resulted in failure to define common aims and wastage of scarce resources.

THERE ARE SIGNS NOW of a more mellow attitude developing. A few archaeological units have emerged with teams of cooperating specialists interested in the formulation of regional research designs, problem-orientated excavation, and the synthesis of complex evidence. At the same time, more theorists are aware that old data are often poor data and that they must take more interest in the collection of primary information.

The image of American salvage archaeology has been equally tarnished by the "have trowel, will travel" mentality of many of its practitioners, and not everyone welcomed the expansion in the field threatened by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the White House's Executive Order 11593, and the Archaeological and Historical Conservation Act of 1974. They created a powerful framework for the survey, conservation, and excavation of archaeological sites threatened by federal projects, but resources do not guarantee good work, especially when the concepts are so new and the expansion so rapid.

Since then American salvage archaeology, like its British equivalent, has been struggling to face its problems. These are clearly illustrated in *Conservation Archaeology: A Guide for Cultural Resource Management Studies*,[11] which should be required reading for all archaeologists involved in "rescue" work, and also for those who are not archaeologists, but think they could do it better. So often the finest demonstrations of theoretical work involve sites of exceptional quality. David Clarke's masterly analysis of the waterlogged Iron Age settlement at Glastonbury and James Hill's work at Broken K Pueblo, in a semi-arid part of Arizona, took advantage of remarkably well-preserved evidence. This does not invalidate their procedures—but the average field archaeologist, faced with a collection of ploughed-out structures on an acidic soil in which no bones, textiles, basketry, woodwork, or waterlogged plant remains survive, is inclined to feel they do not help much. *Conservation Archaeology* contains a mixed bag of papers but the general impression is of a healthy struggle to put theory into practice in contexts which will be all too familiar to most field archaeologists.

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[10] *Sampling in Contemporary British Archaeology*. Edited by J. F. CHERRY, C. GAMBLE and S. SHENNAN. British Archaeological Reports 50 (122 Banbury Road, Oxford), £8.50. For more examples of sampling in practice: J. W. Mueller (ed.), *Sampling in Archaeology* (1975).

[11] *Conservation Archaeology: A Guide for Cultural Resource Management Studies*. Edited by M. B. SCHIFFER and G. J. GUMERMAN. Academic Press, £13.85, $19.50.

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"Cultural resource management" seems reluctant to root in British soil. Nevertheless a diluted and unsystematic version is appearing here with the growth of Archaeological Sites and Monuments records within local authority planning departments and museums. The degree to which the British countryside is unexplored territory is rarely appreciated—almost all the present distribution maps are of limited value. Under the provision of the Ancient Monuments Acts, sites can be protected by being scheduled or taken into guardianship but there has been no attempt to quantify sites of most kinds, and no one knows whether a truly representative sample is being retained. This perhaps makes little difference when, for example, even scheduled Neolithic long barrows on the Cotswolds, some of the country's oldest man-made structures, continue to be ploughed away in spite of their statutory protection. New legislation is in the pipeline, designed primarily to aid archaeological work in urban areas and to deter treasure-hunters. It remains to be seen whether it will protect rural sites.

In spite of the increase in funds to the vociferous rescue pressure group in the early 1970s, the British government has not committed itself wholeheartedly to the conservation case. This is partly the fault of archaeologists themselves. The total failure to quantify their problems except with regard to historic towns[12] has meant they are in no position to present a logical and well-argued case. Emotive and qualitative statements carry little weight with the Treasury.

The failure of archaeologists to present the case for the preservation of a valid sample of their basic evidence is reflected in the attitude of national bodies connected with the conservation of the countryside—almost total unawareness of the problem. The Countryside Commission's *New Agricultural Landscapes* (1974) barely mentioned the erosion of archaeological evidence. The countryside is seen as a potential refuge for birds and bees but not as an ancient human artefact, "the country's most important historic document." Although the National Trust is one of the country's largest owners of archaeological sites, neither it nor anyone else knows how many it possesses. Estates around the Trust's country houses are potentially a valuable reserve of historic features, yet these are being needlessly destroyed because their presence is not known.

[12] C. M. Heighway (ed.), *The Erosion of History* (1972).

THE NOW NOT-SO-NEW archaeologists sometimes write as if their views have been generally

GEORGE ORWELL
memorial prize

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accepted, yet it is still far from evident in recent mainstream general works. John Wacher's *Roman Britain*[13] will undoubtedly be used as a general textbook for the period, yet it totally ignores or rejects recent discussions on urbanisation and trade, and contains the amazing statement that in Iron Age Britain "there was no market in which to dispose of a surplus and therefore farmers grew only for their immediate needs." In addition we are told:

> It is probably best to avoid quantitative methods since there is not sufficient primary evidence available to give them accuracy. In this case, as with computers, if rubbish is put in, rubbish will come out. Locational analyses, for all their apparent scientific appearance when applied to Roman Britain, too often project in a graphical form only the subjective views of the manipulator.

And Wacher has a powerful ally in Professor Sheppard Frere, who ponders "whether there is not ... a close connection between the present day ungovernability of our society—the modern rejection of authority—and the comfortable geographical approach to early settlement."[14]

Antipathy towards quantitative methods is the opposite side of the coin to the American processualists and Hempelite "law and order" brigade with their equally dismissive attitude to historical interpretation as a lesser, almost trivial idiographic and particularist activity. Their traditional lack of respect for historical studies was put much more succinctly by Henry Ford. (Some new archaeologists give the impression that the only historical work they have ever read is *1066 and All That:* they might find the re-issued biography of the philosopher, archaeologist and historian R. G. Collingwood[15] an illuminating experience.) The Russian archaeologist Klejn shows more common sense:

> I consider prehistory and history as science, integrating the data of archaeology, ethnography, the study of written sources ... in the reconstruction of the past and the identification of the causative links between events. Similarly I consider sociology, culturology and social and cultural anthropology as synthesizing disciplines which process the information flowing from archaeology and other disciplines in a manner different from that of history, namely by exposing and formulating principles.[16]

Romanists who attempt to shield their subject from the gorgon-gaze of quantification are doing it a disservice. Roman Britain is a field with a vast amount of data, both archaeological and textual, and a long and vigorous tradition of study. It has a lot to offer the student of urbanisation, marketing and trade, imperialism and culture-change. Hodder's recent discussion of "The Human Geography of Roman Britain"[17] with its Thiessen polygons is neither pseudo-scientific nor anti-humanist as its critics will imply. Rather it is clear, unpretentious, full of concrete examples and interesting ideas.

David Clarke sought to create for archaeology a rigorous universal theory. The lack of a central core is harmful to all aspects of the subject from the most theoretical and academic to the most public. And if, ten years ago, Clarke tried to drag British archaeology to the water, Ian Hodder—his successor at Cambridge—is trying to coax it to drink.

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[13] *Roman Britain.* By JOHN S. WACHER. Dent, £6.95.

[14] S. S. Frere, "The origins of small towns", in W. RODWELL & R. T. ROWLEY (eds.), *Small Towns in Roman Britain* (1975).

[15] *An Autobiography.* By R. G. COLLINGWOOD. With a new introduction by STEPHEN TOULMIN. Oxford University Press, £2.25.

[16] L. S. Klejn, "A Panorama of Theoretical Archaeology", in *Current Anthropology*, 18 (1977).

[17] Ian Hodder, "The Human Geography of Roman Britain", in *An Historical Geography of England and Wales.* Edited by R. A. DODGSHON and R. A. BUTLIN. Academic Press, £14.80, paper £6.80; $30.65, paper $14.00.

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

East Berlin Revisited

By William Treharne Jones

MY FIRST SURPRISE was to discover how many of my old friends and contacts had emigrated to the West. Not just public opponents of the régime, such as the folk-singer Wolf Biermann, but ordinary citizens who had usually done their grumbling privately. I rang one friend who, I recall, had switched from television production to the cultivation of small fish—a change of occupation which gave him both a source of income and time to write—only to get a lady on the phone. "He doesn't live here any more." She added hesitantly, "He's moved to the other side, hasn't he? . . ." "The other side" *(drueben)* is the East German euphemism for the Federal Republic.

All these people, the well-known dissidents and the private malcontents, were the beneficiaries of a strategy of "exporting" opposition. The policy in itself is not new. Opposition figures were expelled in the past; the régime has been selling prisoners to the Federal Republic since the mid-1960s (for hard Western cash per head); and the secret police, the *Stasi*, had long ago infiltrated Western-based escape organisations, and uses them as a channel for getting rid of people regarded as undesirable. What was new in the last several years was the scale of the "export" policy, which formed part of the régime's response to two separate but not dissimilar strands of opposition.

One strand was provoked by the Party's decision to strip Wolf Biermann of his citizenship and refuse to allow him back into the DDR after his tour in West Germany. About a hundred writers, actors, artists and entertainers signed a letter of protest which was then published in the West. The Party, though stung by this unwonted display of opposition, refused to retract its decision, thus confirming the widespread fear that Biermann's expatriation signalled the end of the more tolerant and flexible *Kulturpolitik* of the early '70s. Those intellectuals who could not face this new, bleaker climate were allowed, or encouraged—sometimes unpleasantly—to emigrate. Over twenty have done so, among them such leading figures as the poet Reiner Kunze,[1] the theatre producer Adolf Dresen, and the singer Manfred Krug.

The second strand of opposition was both more broadly based and had an overt civil-rights flavour to it. After years of being treated as a pariah by the non-Communist world it is understandable that, having at last achieved diplomatic recognition by the West and membership of the United Nations, the East German government should make great play of its activities as an equal member of the international community. Consequently much publicity was given to the Government's signing of the UN declaration of Human Rights and the Helsinki Accord. The texts of these agreements were readily available, and East German citizens discovered that every human being has the right to leave his own country, or so the UN declaration states; while Helsinki pledges governments to work for "greater contacts" between people divided by the Iron Curtain. Armed with these texts, and encouraged by the optimism of *détente*, many called at their local police stations to submit applications to emigrate. By the close of 1976 it was estimated that up to 120,000 applications—some of them on behalf of whole families—had been filed. This upsurge of citizens' self-confidence alarmed the régime, and although (as I discovered during my visit to East Berlin) some applicants were indeed lucky, the authorities eventually clamped down. Emigration applications are no longer accepted; those who have outstanding applications are ignored, pressurised into retraction or, in extreme cases, imprisoned.

THE WHOLE EPISODE has left a bitter taste in some people's mouths. Why is it, they ask, that some intellectuals and artists are allowed, even encouraged, to emigrate—but they may not? Why are dissidents like Wolf Biermann or Juergen Fuchs forced—against their expressed will—to go, although they had insisted they would rather stay in the East and "work for the improvement of socialism", while the average non-Communist (or even anti-Communist) citizen must stay? For ordinary East Germans, who may be more interested in visiting the West than staying there, the Wall and the Frontier minefields are a source of great aggravation. This frustrated feeling has been partly responsible for the growing number of pitched battles between teenagers and police, of which the most serious, on the Alexanderplatz in East Berlin a year or so ago, left three dead and 200 People's Policemen seriously injured.

Despite the clampdown, there are still ways for

[1] See in ENCOUNTER, Reiner Kunze, "The Wonderful Years" (July 1978).

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East Germans to reach the West. Those with husband or wife, children or even parents in the Federal Republic are eligible to leave; old-age pensioners may emigrate; those who have been imprisoned for any remotely political crime may well be bought free by the West Germans; and the plucky ones can try climbing the Wall or smuggling themselves out, with or without the help of underground escape organisations. But not every East German can or will avail himself of these opportunities. . . .

MY SECOND SURPRISE was a more physical sensation: the vast amount of building in the centre of East Berlin. In the Friedrichstrasse a monster-sized hotel has already opened its doors, while a few yards away, on the other side of the street, a multi-storey trade centre is nearing completion. Showpiece of the capital is the Palast der Republik, a shiny rectangular box of glass and concrete on the Marx-Engels-Platz, close to the site of an old royal Hohenzollern palace. Inside, under the glitter of chandeliers, sober citizens in their Sunday best (or the Communist equivalent thereof) parade stiffly past marble columns and gigantic garish murals depicting the struggles of the toiling masses. East Berliners are apparently impressed by their palace and have been quick to take advantage of the cultural (and gastronomic) facilities it has to offer. But though the locals manage to humanise this pompous edifice—just as they have humanised the windswept spaces round the Alexanderplatz—there is something very disquieting about the new Berlin east of the Brandenburg Gate.

For a start there is the style of the new buildings. With the exception of the Foreign Ministry building, completed some ten years ago, the new structures appear characterless. They could have been plucked from any international airport: their glossy exteriors seem to be fashioned after the "jet-set world" of Peter Stuyvesant. As for the location of the new buildings: the large spaces at the foot of the television tower, symmetrical and impersonal, do at least allow the visitor to come to terms with the sheer size of the new edifices and to grasp the notable survival of the Marienkirche, the city's oldest church, and the Rote Rathaus, East Berlin's redbrick Gothic town hall. But this aspect of planning seems to have been forgotten in the Marx-Engels-Platz where a host of huge buildings of totally contrasting styles jostle unharmoniously for the eye's attention. The Protestant cathedral, the Dom (a lumbering monstrosity in Wilhelmine baroque, which the authorities have at last begun to restore), always sat rather uncomfortably close to the Old Museum and the other soot-covered war-scarred pieces of Prussian Classicism on the Museum Island. But now the Dom has rivals in ugliness. Across the street glistens the Palace of the Republic, while on the other side of the Spree stands a spanking new hotel, complete with brown tinted glass; it was designed by the Swedes, the Western neighbour the régime finds ideologically least offensive.

The aesthetic objections to the new buildings in East Berlin are nothing compared with the political controversy surrounding another recent architectural growth—the "Intershops", where East Germans who have West German currency can buy goods unavailable in normal DDR stores, or obtainable only at a high price. Four years ago, such stores could only be found at border crossing points. Since then they have mushroomed: indeed there are so many in East Berlin that in one day I twice entered them by accident, mistaking them for ordinary shops.

THERE'S NO DENYING the popularity of the Intershops. A bottle of Scotch, which costs about 80 Eastmarks in a regular store, costs just over 20 Westmarks in an Intershop; and the display of blue jeans in the Metro Hotel Intershop (jeans are as much the required teenage uniform in the East as in the West) is a perpetual object of fascination for young East Germans. The advantage of the shops for the régime is twofold. They satisfy consumer demand—which the undoubted growth in living standards over the past decade or more has greatly encouraged. And they enable the régime to mop up the large amount of Deutsch-Marks in circulation, brought in (sometimes, but not always, as presents) by the millions of West German tourists, relatives, and other visitors. The hard currency so amassed is used by the authorities for the all-important purchase of goods, especially capital goods, from the West. A visitor to East Berlin soon discovers just how controversial the Intershops are. The subject crops up in every conversation and few East Germans can refrain from expressing strong opinions.

For the shops have introduced a new class division into East German society—an unwelcome addition to the existing bureaucratic rift between political élite and populace. The new cleavage is between those lucky enough to have relatives in the West—and through them access to hard D-Marks—and those who do not. The growth of a new privileged class is, as that "old-Stalinist heretic" Wolfgang Harich[2] tartly observed in an interview with a Western newspaper, ideologically reprehensible.

[2] See my "The Heresies of Wolfgang Harich", in ENCOUNTER (August 1977).

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"The basic principle of socialism is 'to each according to his achievement' and not 'to each according to the address of his aunt'."

(*Die Grundformel des Sozialismus lautet: 'Jedem nach seinen Leistungen', und nicht: 'Jedem nach dem Wohnsitz seiner Tante'.*)[3]

Quite apart from ideological considerations, the sheer social unfairness of the Intershop system creates resentment among those who have no access to Westmarks and a certain uneasiness among some of those who do. The usual cynical jokes have appeared, of which the following is an unfunny but telling example.

Small Child to Mother: "Can we go to the Intershop, and buy something nice?"
Mother: "No, we can't, I haven't any Western money."
Child: "Can't we just have a look?"

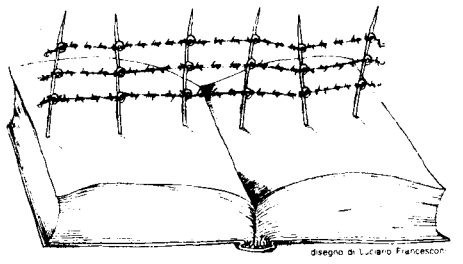
Some of the non-privileged are reported to have expressed their resentment more openly. Workers at one factory asked that part of their pay packets should be in D-Marks—a not unreasonable demand in view of the tendency of plumbers, painters, and the like to demand Westmarks for their services. The D-Mark has become the second currency in East Germany rather like the US dollar is in Poland.

In addition to the social unrest caused by this aspect of the Honecker leadership's "consumerism", Party conservatives are also worried about the policy's Western emphasis. They fear any increase in their country's already considerable economic dependence on West Germany, now their largest trading partner after the Soviet Union. They dislike pandering to petty-bourgeois demands for a "Western standard of living" (though their Marxian alternative is merely a poorer imitation). And they suspect that the growth of Western-style consumerism is closely connected with irrepressible restlessness among both intellectuals and ordinary people. Although it is reported that the ideologically orthodox enjoy Soviet sympathy, Erich Honecker appears to be hanging on to the Intershops—and other "Western elements" of his consumer policy. One explanation for this may be that the increased price of Soviet raw materials and Western capital goods since the oil crisis has caused so many economic headaches that the leadership cannot afford to overlook unorthodox short-cuts to consumer satisfaction.

AS WELL AS retaining the Intershop system, Honecker has managed to prevent the clampdown of recent years from getting out of hand. Of course, this restraint may reflect a recognition of the stronger self-confidence of the citizens, and this in its turn has probably been sustained by the new presence of a large West German press and TV corps which, like the millions of visitors, is a direct consequence of the *détente* agreements of 1971-73. West German television no longer just broadcasts to East Germans, it broadcasts *from* them. Many East Germans have been prepared to comment freely and frankly—perhaps too frankly—in front of Western microphones and television cameras. This development, in its infancy when I left Berlin, is of major importance and has led to a running fight between the DDR Foreign Ministry and the

[3] *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, 12 May 1978, p. 4.

"Intimidation"



IT was a year ago, at the PEN conference in Stockholm, that the East German Communists in the name of the DDR (German Democratic Republic) and the whole Soviet bloc took the lead in the movement to abolish those chapters based on Writers-in-Exile who have taken refuge in the West. They have made some headway, particularly with the support of some Dutch writers and intellectuals. But the majority of the International PEN has refused to go along.

Now in Hamburg there has been a meeting of various chapters of these Writers-in-Exile, and one new and particularly upsetting problem has arisen—namely, the hostile attitudes which some Western publishing houses are increasingly taking to refugee writers who have incurred the disapproval or wrath of the Eastern censors and commissars. Tadeusz Novakovski, whose novels have been published in West Germany (and there are a number of English translations too), has underscored the new wave of threats from the East—namely, that those Western publishers who continue to publish the exiles will not receive copyright licences for any East European books. What Novakovski has called a mix of "cowardice and opportunism" is causing serious difficulties. The PEN clubs have appealed to Western publishers rather to express solidarity with the refugee writers. Gabriel Laub, the Czech satirist, was re-elected chairman of the exiled authors group, and expressed the hope that no one in the Western cultural scene would be intimidated.

in *Die Welt* (Hamburg)

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more aggressive and probing Western correspondents. Deprived (at least in East Berlin where West German correspondents do the bulk of their work) of the freedom to repress without fear of publicity, the *Stasi* are now obliged to work more subtly. This, I suspect, has influenced the whole Communist pattern of repression and control.

An example of the new "subtlety" is the treatment meted out to the writers and artists who opposed Wolf Biermann's expatriation but did not follow him into exile. Some of them have been persecuted. Although their works have not been withdrawn from circulation they have been publicly criticised, their manuscripts,[4] screenplays, etc., rejected, their phones tapped, their homes closely observed, and their families harassed. Others have been treated more gently: they have been allowed to travel and lecture in the West (a much desired privilege) and their new works have been published.[5] A curious feature of official policy is the absence of any recognisable criterion to explain why one recalcitrant writer is in trouble while another has been ignored or even favoured. Arbitrariness, although unsettling, has not cowed the braver spirits. They have conducted an open correspondence in the West German press, in which they discuss the present cultural climate and criticise "Eastern socialism" in no uncertain terms.

THIS EXERCISE in what one might call "external freedom of speech" triggered off an episode last year which was still being enthusiastically analysed when I arrived many weeks after the event. No less a figure than Konrad Naumann (the powerful Party Secretary for Berlin and a leading member of the Politburo) attacked the whole phenomenon in a well-publicised speech at the 8th Plenum of the Central Committee. Particularly disturbing was the language he used, which was reminiscent of gloomier periods during the Ulbricht era. Naumann claimed that the motive of those who published their "reform proposals" in the West German press was mainly financial: they wanted to earn Western currency. To rub in the point, he quoted a *bürgerliche* saying which he claimed reflected the attitude of "certain bourgeois artists in the DDR":

> "The most intimate of all intimacies is money. And when one knows how much money a man has, one knows almost everything about him."[6]

Naumann's motivational analysis is curious in view of his own well-known penchant for the creature comforts enjoyed by the Communist élite everywhere. Even more curious was the angry response to his speech at the Writers' Congress a few days later. Most striking of all, that reply—by Stephan Hermlin, one of the most respected (and most liberal) of the older writers—was fairly summarised in *Neues Deutschland*, the Party newspaper. Hermlin made no bones about his own "bourgeois" background. The fact that he was a *spätbürgerlicher Schriftsteller* was, he insisted, totally compatible with his Communist beliefs. Such openness and bluntness was surprising enough. But Hermlin's description of Naumann's speech as a piece of demagogic anti-intellectualism (... *In Ermangelung wirklicher Argumente* [*habe*] *man angeblich zu einer Demagogie und zu einer Herabsetzung von Intellektuellen gegriffen*) was truly astonishing. This view, the *Neues Deutschland* reporter was quick to add, was not shared by all of Hermlin's colleagues.[7]

Open, unplanned, unorganised criticism of a leading member of the Politburo would never have been published in the old days, even in the "liberalising" early '70s. Publication now, in harsher times, is even more extraordinary.[8]

In a way both the exceptional episode and its interpretations are irrelevant. The harassment of writers and artists over the past two years, though patchy, even mild, has been sufficient to kill all hope of any immediate return to the more relaxed pre-1976 cultural atmosphere. Morale among artists and writers is low, the lowest I have known over the decade; many writers feel it pointless to submit any really controversial manuscripts. In such a situation further police-state repression is quite unnecessary. The party has discovered that arbitrary harassment at home, export to the West of really difficult cases, and occasional exposure of policy differences at higher level seem less offensive than the totalist crudities of the repression of yesteryear—yet at the same time guarantee the main objective: the re-establishment of tight Party

[4] Such as Rolf Schneider's *November*, a fictional account of the Biermann affair.

[5] Such as Klaus Schlesinger's *Berliner Traum: 5 Geschichten* (Fischer is the West German publisher). Schlesinger, like Rolf Schneider, was a signatory of the Biermann letter.

[6] *Neues Deutschland*, Berlin edition, 26 May 1978, p. 3.

[7] *Neues Deutschland*, Berlin edition, 31 May 1978, p. 4.

[8] Any explanation must begin with Hermlin's friendship with Honecker, which goes back some thirty years. Some East Germans have concluded from this that Honecker was reluctant for Naumann's crude outburst to go unchallenged. Honecker, I was assured, is fighting off attempts by Naumann, as a leader of the hardline conservative faction in the Politburo, to tighten up still further.

Other conservative figures are believed (*Spiegel*, 52/78, p. 29) to have been responsible for the fall of Hans Bentzien, culture-boss at East German television. His crime: the broadcasting of a play exposing the opportunism of East German "careerists" and the hollowness of their marriages.

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control over the arts. The debate within the Party leadership has, over the past four years or so, shifted from "How much can we allow?" to "How much must we restrict?"

Yet however much the "creators of culture" (*Kulturschaffenden*, as they are officially called) bemoan their lot, they have got off fairly lightly—a reflection of their relative unimportance to the SED as a pressure group and of their own loyalist preference for "working within the system." The mailed fist has been reserved for those who challenge the Party from outside the system, whose radically dissident example could be attractive to more important social groups.

ONE SUCH CHALLENGE is the young economist, Rudolf Bahro, who was sentenced last June to eight years imprisonment for "spying for the West." In fact Bahro's "crime" was the publication of his book, *The Alternative*, in West Germany [9] after it had been rejected by a DDR publisher. Few doubt that the spying charge was intended to scare off other potential dissidents and justify the Party's reluctance to discuss the book's contents. Such reticence is in many ways understandable. The most powerful section of *The Alternative* indicts the system's inherent inability to run the economy; it is an old stricture, but now especially apt in view of the recent alarming slow-down of growth rates. Here Bahro was able to draw on his own industrial experience: he had spent the ten years before his arrest as a director of an East German rubber complex.

During my visit to East Berlin, conversations suggested that Bahro's sharp critique might prove attractive to the "technical intelligentsia" whom the régime relies on to manage the economy. Bahro himself has reckoned that perhaps 200–300 copies of his book would be smuggled into the country; still, I found no great interest in his ideas among my friends. Perhaps it will take time for his theories to trickle through. Part of the trouble is that Bahro was completely unknown before the book appeared, and the considerable publicity surroundings its publication was cut short by his arrest. Before 1977, Bahro was just one of thousands of party functionaries who—at least outwardly—loyally do their duty. He had studied philosophy and then had a conventional party career as a trades union official, journalist and economist. His only real brush with his superiors followed his encouragement of discussion in the student weekly, *Forum* (of which he was deputy editor in the 1960s). Bahro became a dissident after the crushing of the Prague Spring but he kept his decision to himself, writing his "great work" secretly, in his spare time. How many other Party officials are doing the same?

Nor is Bahro's rather utopian prescription for East Germany's ills conducive to popularity. He advocates the establishment of an institutionalised opposition, a democratic "Federation of Communists" which would work towards the realm of freedom Marx had originally envisaged. Why the existing *Apparat* should tolerate such a challenge is not explained. Bahro naively leaves the power question unanswered: a devastating omission for anyone challenging a régime as power-conscious as Communist East Germany.

Whatever his limitations, few doubt that the authorities would gladly exile Bahro to the West. It is less clear whether he would be prepared to go. Last year, in a letter smuggled out to *Der Spiegel*, he proclaimed his intention of sticking to his guns, despite the possibility of psychological pressure to recant or depart. But a second more recent letter suggests that he would accept exile.

Evidently he believes, in an odd twist of East-West logic, that in prison he serves only as a symbol of the "Cold War", but were he to be exiled he could emphasise the role that Marxists and Communists could constructively play in Western Europe. Apparently the "*petite différence*", namely bourgeois freedom, is beginning to matter.

THE OTHER WELL-KNOWN DISSIDENT is Robert Havemann. Now the oldest public opponent of the régime, he was expelled both from his Professorship at the Humboldt University and from the Party as long ago as 1964; his reward for protesting against the expatriation of Biermann was indefinite house-arrest. This has not been without its ludicrous aspects. Thus the only people allowed to visit Havemann at his home outside East Berlin are immediate members of his family, the local pastor (Havemann is not religious), and, for reasons unexplained, the wife of the dentist who lives across the street. Up to 200 policemen take turns in guarding the Havemann property—they even occupy the summer-house in his garden—and when Havemann and his young wife make a trip into town they are escorted by five police vehicles. The purpose of this absurd waste of public money and resources is, paradoxically, to pressurise Havemann into emigrating to the West, something he resolutely refuses to consider. He still feels it his duty to stay and fight for "democratic socialism" in what is for him—despite all its failings—"historically" the more advanced German half-state. He still somehow manages to smuggle material to his publishers in the West, despite the guards outside his front door.[10]

Why don't the authorities imprison Havemann if

[9] Published last year in London by New Left Books.

[10] Details from Robert Havemann, *Ein Deutscher Kommunist* (Rowohlt, 1978).

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HISTORY TODAY

Edited by Peter Quennell and Alan Hodge

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Longman

he continues to refuse to emigrate? The most widely accepted explanation for their reluctance is a lingering respect for Havemann's Communist record during the Nazi period. Both Havemann and Honecker were in the same *Gestapo* jail for the last two years of the War; Havemann had been sentenced to death for membership of a Communist resistance group. But fear of "adverse publicity" in the West may also explain official reluctance to imprison him—a further example of the moderating influence of the West German media-corps in East Berlin.

INDEED, THE WEST GERMAN MEDIA have come to treat the DDR as a part of Germany, albeit a strange one. The tone has become almost grotesquely intimate, as if hot gossip across the frontiers was an all-German duty. A bizarre example is a personal attack on Havemann by his 26-year-old son, published recently by *Der Spiegel*. Florian Havemann, who escaped to the West a few years ago, accused his father of "vanity", of being a "womaniser" and a dilettante, and, most strange of all, of not-even-being-a-Marxist! Florian may well be bitter about his parents' divorce and his father's remarriage (to a woman 39 years younger). But bitterness aside, the son's less personal criticism is worth registering—in particular his contention that English classical liberalism, German social democracy, and the French Enlightenment, rather than Marx, were the inspiration of the Havemann heresies.

DER SPIEGEL's decision to publish Florian's attack, though in execrable taste, is a reminder that Germany today, divided by what still is a very iron curtain, is in many respects one "beat" as far as the gathering and dissemination of news is concerned. East and West Germans can (and do) watch the same TV programmes, hear the same radio broadcasts, even read some of the same magazines (a not insignificant number of West German magazines and weekly newspapers are smuggled in). The official Communist media are in an invidious and unreal situation, except in far-off eastern corners of the country (*Westblinde Kreise*, as they are known) beyond the reach of Western transmitters. But following the so-called "*deutsch-deutsch*" *détente* agreements, even these areas frequently have visitors. The régime's chances of indoctrinating the population, free of Western distractions, are now more remote than ever.

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INTERVIEW

Andrei Sinyavsky on Dissidence

ANDREI DONATOVITCH, *what are the objectives of dissidents who find themselves in emigration?*

SINYAVSKY: Very often Western political correspondents put the question: "There are, after all, not that many dissidents in Russia. What if you don't win? . . ." Implying at the same time, "So why should we then support you?" . . . or, "In any case, you can't save people in prison—so what's the use of it?" My own personal attitude is that morality and ethics, like art, has its own intrinsic value and does not depend on whether we can, for instance, free Alexander Ginzburg. I mention him because I love him and am greatly perturbed about his fate: I know him and owe him a great deal. Let's assume he won't be freed. So are we supposed to cease our efforts, knowing in advance that we can't free him? Certainly not. The good deed has its own value—just as, in a wider sense, nature and all things that surround us have their own independent value.

I am delighted that right now new and interesting journals are emerging: *The Ark (Kovcheg)*; *The Echo*; *22*. But again the pragmatic view is, "What's the point of all these? Wouldn't it be better to produce one strong, powerful journal and hurl it against this wall which, alas, refuses to crumble?" I dispute this view because our whole problem is not one of ultimate destruction. We are not a political party that aims at seizing power, at revolution.

In the wider sense of the word, "dissidence" is not just an opposition that emerged in relation to the regime. People began to write, to think, to care for what is right—and all these things have their own intrinsic value, are important in themselves—regardless of whether they will be victorious in the end. Incidentally, history teaches us this very same thing. You can't look upon the Decembrists as Lenin did: ". . . the Decembrists paved the way for Herzen . . . Herzen paved the way for the Populists . . . and this led in the end to the October Revolution. . . ." Oh no! The Decembrists didn't "pave the way" for anybody: they were a phenomenon which had its own independent value and worth.

Russian culture—of which we are small particles—faces many tasks. A new kind of prose, a new style of poetry appears, not perhaps expressed straight away in the most brilliant way; nevertheless, it's a phenomenon which deserves its rightful place. We are always told, "With so many journals about, some are bound to close down, the effort can't be sustained, the money will run out. . . ." All right, they may close down. But their transitory existence at a particular time we already have created its own value and as such yield a valuable result. I personally would like to see diversity and variety. If any journal appears, then its appearance was sparked off by demands which do not depend on whether or not we shall conquer the common enemy. Some like to see religious or philosophical issues aired—others are concerned with new styles in poetry and prose—all of which is interesting.

I fear uniformity; and dissidence in its wider sense is not one single, uniform party. The whole meaning of the dissidents' moral victory lies in the fact that people have begun to think. I remember our discussions with older Russians who did not share our views. "Yes, indeed", they would admit, "this-and-that is a terrible thing. . . . Even so, ours is an advance to Communism and we can't afford a difference in views." To me, that is a monumental error; it is tempting fate. Our fate is not somewhere in the future, it is here, everywhere.

—Perhaps men tend to go for an ultimate aim, a final goal?

THIS INTERVIEW WITH ANDREI SINYAVSKY *was conducted in Paris, by* N. BOKOV, *a correspondent of "La Pensée Russe." Sinyavsky's earlier account of the difficulties of dissidents in the emigration was published in the September 1978 issue.*

For allowing his works to be published in the West, Sinyavsky was in 1966 sentenced to hard labour by a Soviet court and held in a succession of forced-labour camps until 1971. In 1973 he was allowed to leave the USSR, and he settled in Paris where he now teaches at the Sorbonne. See, in ENCOUNTER, *Leopold Labedz's "The Trial in Moscow" (April 1966) and Hélène Zamoyska's report on his arrival in the West (November 1973).*

Among Sinyavsky's books are "The Makepeace Experiment", "The Trial Begins", "On Socialist Realism" and "A Voice from the Chorus" (Fontana, 1977). His story "The Trial Begins", written under the pseudonym of "Abram Tertz" appeared in the January 1960 issue of ENCOUNTER, *and was followed by "The Icicle" (February 1962) and "Phkentz" (April 1966). His articles on Boris Pasternak and on Evtushenko appeared in our April 1966 and April 1967 issues.*

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SINYAVSKY: Indeed. But I think Europe can teach us some things—although I'm not a "Westerner", rather a Slavophile. What final objective do the French have? To conquer the world and make it French? We Russians do indeed tend to extremes. Sometimes this produces brilliant results in the world of the mind; but in the social sphere it can mean disaster. We set ourselves an aim, an objective—and in the name of that objective we sacrifice ourselves and others. Europe can teach us the value of things in themselves. We Russians grow apple orchards "in order to supply apples to the whole of mankind. . . ." Europeans, on the other hand, like to grow apples for the sake of growing apples. In Europe we admire buildings, we see that they are works of art. But we cannot look upon art with a view to its "final objective"; that would be meaningless.

The European world is interesting and remarkable, aesthetically speaking, for its creation of form. Some may ask, what's the use of "form" seen from the point of view of eternity, or eventual world communism, or any other grandiose objective? And indeed, 60 years of Communism have successfully stamped out all "form", such as individual farming, or little private gardens—"Let's dig it all up and make it into collectives, for the sake of the great ultimate objective!" Thus all form, all individuality, has been eroded. The peasant, the artisan, the labourer, even the intellectual, no longer retain their individuality, their own form.

—Isn't the same gradually happening over here, in the West?

SINYAVSKY: Of course, general standardisation must lead to this. But even though something gradually dies out "in the end", it doesn't mean it must be liquidated before the gradual process is over, does it? The mammoth is extinct, but it did exist and we can still admire its form, although we never set eyes on it. But it did exist; that's what is so marvellous. Yet had some terrible, all-powerful creator decided, "The mammoths will die out eventually anyway, so let's do away with them now", there would have been no mammoths, no mastodons, nothing at all from the past—and all destroyed in the name of the Future, in the name of the Final Objective. What a terrible temptation, to put everything ahead of you, with nothing at all behind you.

—Is it the "man of culture" whom you expect to come to the forefront?

SINYAVSKY: I believe that everything is culture: nature, history, the world—all is human culture. Culture is structure; structure is always form, regardless of whether the structures, the forms, survive. In Russia, we heard the argument, "What's the point of all these churches? Let's get rid of them! . . ." But the same atheists in the West don't proceed to destroy the churches, because of their form, their own intrinsic value, regardless of whether you believe or don't believe in God.

—Yet a politically-minded person could say to you: This is all very well, but you can't organise the movement around "culture" and "men of culture." An opposition is founded on political ideals.

SINYAVSKY: Certainly. Let political ideals exist, but they must not be allowed to destroy culture. We in the Soviet Union have gone through all this and perhaps learned something from it. I do believe that the Revolutionaries were prompted by great and beautiful ideals, but in the process they managed to erode culture. Today, bit by bit, piece by piece, we are trying to put it all together again. And if again we select a purely political movement, something else that is precious will be destroyed. We already had that grand ideal, the Communist ideal—which was a truly great concept, not just the seizure of power by a handful of scoundrels. But when you lose God in the process, you can't build paradise on earth. We say there is nothing higher than human individuality which, too, has its own value. But individuality, personality, is also a form. We have already learned the hard way that individuality must not be sacrificed for "the community." So why should we again sacrifice our individuality? The Bolsheviks already did that before us.

HOW THEN *is the "man of culture" to live alongside the political man who creates, as it were, the pace of life, who has the means of imposing his point of view?*

SINYAVSKY: We must defend our independence. Very often the politically minded don't realise that culture is the basis of all life. Let's assume the Soviet Union sets about conquering the West. The West will stand firm precisely because of its cultural structure. Of course tanks can flatten all buildings and trees and forms. But the West will offer resistance not merely with the help of the atom bomb, one atom bomb against the other; but will resist precisely because of its structure, that is to say, its culture.

When we Soviet persons come over here, we tend to panic. Good heavens, back there all those colossal tank divisions . . . and what are they doing over here? Enjoying their glass of wine, walking their dogs through the parks of Paris, apparently unaware of the gathering danger! But when you look closer, you realise it has its good aspect. Their structure resembles a honeycomb: very light, and one would imagine at first glance that it could be

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blown away quite easily. Yet inside, what a lasting, enduring structure it is.

The Soviet structure is something quite different. It's a vast sack filled with flour, sand, dust, perhaps even gold—and it is held together only because it's firmly tied. If this sack splits or becomes untied, everything spills out.

—Well, then, somebody could say—let's split the sack!

SINYAVSKY: To make it split would require equal counter-strength; that is to say, the West would have to lose its own soul and become a force similar to the Soviet force or to Hitler's: dictatorships, in fact. Incidentally, our Russians when they come over to the West have this tendency to say: "Why is there so much freedom here? Why all that information? It should be limited!" And so we have this paradox: people who were saved thanks to this free-flowing information come to the West and propose to cut down the very freedoms that saved their lives. These are chinks in our own armour we cannot afford.

What is happening in Russia is, on the one hand, extremely cheerless: that is to say, nothing is happening. On the other hand, all that has happened—including dissidence, and more—is fascinating. The whole of Russian culture had been hacked away, burned out; nothing, it would seem, had remained. And suddenly, on this barren field, tiny green shoots began springing up. Doesn't that mean that the people and the nation and the land still have in them some life-giving sap? They don't let us forfeit it by widening our own aridity; that would be terrible.

I believe that diversity is a splendid thing. It is splendid to have a Solzhenitsyn and a Sakharov, a Plyushch and a Zinoviev. I am not a Marxist but I am happy to know that the world has Leonid Plyushch who cannot be pigeon-holed. True, our Russian-Soviet heritage sometimes leads us to a point where disputes among ourselves threaten to turn into a kind of mutual extermination. Dissenters among dissenters may become enemies. But if we see our ideological opponent invariably as an enemy, then we are merely reiterating the logic of the Soviet régime.

I am told that our differences help the *KGB*. I don't know. What about *your* like-mindedness, the call to "close ranks"—wouldn't that help them even more? All you can do is be yourself, to behave naturally—that's all.

—It is also the hardest, "being oneself"... it already comes within the realm of higher philosophy.

SINYAVSKY: Yet it is also the easiest thing. Pushkin is our best example. But even Pushkin we're beginning to treat in the same way. I read recently in a much-respected religious émigré journal that Pushkin had constantly progressed to that poem he wrote towards the end of his life, "Old Hermits and Young Virgins Chaste." It also said that he reached that end along a complex and tortuous road, through the "Gavriliada." Thus it would seem that Pushkin eventually reached the desired goal: Monarchy and Orthodoxy. In my view, this is to lose sight of Pushkin, to lose sight of the poet's artistic diversity and inner tolerance. For Pushkin was extraordinarily tolerant of cultural phenomena. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, reduce him simply to such works of his as "Liberty" and "Message to Siberia." Pushkin offered us peace—and we're trying to turn him into an ideology once again. After all, one could extract lines from his "Imitation of the Koran" and promptly turn him into a Mohammedan ideologist....

—What did you think of the reaction to your book "Walks with Pushkin"?

SINYAVSKY: I've had a lot of trouble with my *Walks*. The suspicion was even expressed that I wrote this book at the behest of the *KGB*, that I had a special library set up for me in the camp, that I was provided with the necessary "ambiance" for a work that was to transfix Russian literature. In reality, of course, it wasn't like that at all. I began writing about Pushkin—out of despair. I tried to express my beliefs, my creed, backed up by Pushkin. When they abused me, I wondered why I had made straight for Pushkin in camp. Obviously, because the problems were similar. In that situation, who else could I appeal to but Pushkin?

TOGETHER WITH *M. V. Rozanova (Sinyavskaya) you began publishing the journal "Syntaxis." What prompted you to do that?*

SINYAVSKY: The feeling of impotence to express one's ideas within the framework of contemporary émigré periodicals. We came up against a kind of censorship—not, of course, on a Soviet scale but a censorship nevertheless. Some things could not be mentioned, others had to be put differently. We came up against a kind of "party spirit." That's what made us want to create a modest paper that would act as an amplification to other journals. The very title *Syntaxis* was a reference to the first *Samizdat* journal in Russia, Alexander Ginzburg's journal *Syntaxis*. Our first issue appeared at the start of the Ginzburg trial. We wanted to remind the world of this remarkable man. The title refers, of course, also to Syntax as such, the unity and expressiveness of sentences, untrammelled free

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speech, be it common everyday speech or a poetic rendering. I see it as the freedom for one branch to go one way, for another branch to go another, but still remain part of the common trunk of "Syntaxical" Russian culture.

And there was another problem we came up against—a problem of journalistic genre. It appeared that besides myself a number of other writers could not fit into the framework of contemporary émigré literature. It seemed that some acute issues were not to be raised—issues which I consider highly important, such as anti-Semitism in Russia—not merely at Governmental level but among intellectual (and, at times, even dissident) circles. I know that my article on anti-Semitism in the second issue of *Syntaxis* provoked special criticisms and reprimands. "No, no, we mustn't talk about such things! That's a taboo subject. . . ."

When I hear that some subject is taboo, not to be mentioned, I realise at once that this is the one subject that *must* be mentioned. Writers and journalists can't write only about subjects that are considered permissible; they must write about subjects that are considered impermissible. So why was my article necessary? First, because news is constantly coming from Russia about intensified anti-Semitism at various levels. And I wanted to tackle this subject because I am Russian, and a Russian writer. Jews have written a great deal about anti-Semitism—I felt that it was time a Russian wrote about it. And I put this problem as a problem not of Jewish but of Russian misfortune. For anti-Semitism is dealing a wounding blow to Russia as a whole.

WHAT DO YOU THINK *of the various new journals?*

SINYAVSKY: There has been some inertia both in emigration and in Russia, with a reliance on classical traditions, a belief that every writer must be accessible to the public and be easily understood by them. And yet we all have the most diverse hopes for Russian literature. If that literature is to have a future then it must achieve rather more than just being accessible and easily understood. It is diversity that guarantees the greatness of literature—the sort of diversity we had in that wonderful 19th century and the fine beginnings of the 20th. Hence it is vitally important to publish works which stylistically may not be to the taste of a wide readership but which contain something that is new—yes, even purely experimental. That is why I very much like for example the journal *Ark*.

The new trends in Russian prose seem to me extremely important for the preservation of literature as a whole. And I am very happy to see these trends in such journals as *The Ark* or *Echo*: for literary activity in Russia simply cannot be reduced to just a few classics, however great.

LETTERS

The Riga View

LOUIS LABEDZ has got things all wrong when he picks on me ("Isaac Deutscher's Stalin", ENCOUNTER, January) as a victim of illusions about the Stalinist régime in Soviet Russia. I was an opponent of Stalin's as early as 1928 and attacked both the war against the kulaks and the "purge" trials. I do not need any reminder of Muggeridge's *Winter in Moscow*, which I described in *English History 1914–1945* as "probably the best book ever written about Soviet Russia." My review of Daniel Yergin's book is irrelevant to this issue. His book was solely about international relations. Discussing American policy he distinguished two American views about Russia: the Riga view which held that Soviet Russia aimed to conquer the world, and the Yalta view which regarded Soviet Russia as a normal Great Power, determined to assert its equality and motivated by an anxiety for security. I agreed with the second view. This was a guess but so are all views about Soviet Russia, including those of Louis Labedz. If he cannot grasp the difference about views on Russia's internal system and her foreign policy, I am afraid I cannot provide him with the ability to understand it. However he might occasionally temper his enthusiasm as a Cold Warrior with a little more care for the facts.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

London

1. A. J. P. TAYLOR reproaches me with getting "things all wrong", but he himself cannot even quote my forename correctly, although it was given at the top of my article. His other references are not less erratic.

2. I know that he was never a Stalinist. He is too much of a maverick to toe any Party line (he opposed it at the Communist propaganda circus in Wroclaw in 1946, though I wonder why he ever went there). In any case that does not mean that he has none of the stereotyped illusions about the Soviet Union.

3. Contrary to what he says, his review of Daniel Yergin's book *is relevant* to the issue. He wrote in it: "To the present day there has been no expansion of Soviet Communism and no territorial expansion of Russian imperialism." The "Riga stereotype" underlies such illusions. The statement also happens to be factually wrong. Perhaps he should take his own advice about taking "a little more care for the facts."

4. His statements which reflect his continuing illusions about the Soviet Union are penny-a-dozen. In the recently published photographic collection, *The Russian Front*, he wrote, for instance, that "the greatest crime of the Soviet Union in Western eyes is to have no capitalists and no landlords." This ironic wisecrack just manages to overlook the Western perception of Gulag, psychiatric prisons, and other real Soviet crimes.

5. A. J. P. Taylor clings to the view that the Soviet Union is simply "motivated by an anxiety for security" as any "normal Great Power" is. He divorces the internal

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Soviet system from its foreign policy. He employed quite the same method in his analysis of Nazi Germany. As a result, the expansionism of Hitler, of Stalin, or Brezhnev appears in his writings as no different in principle from Western resistance to totalitarian threats and pressures. Those who want to resist are only a miserable bunch of enthusiastic "Cold Warriors", a most reprehensible species.

6. A. J. P. Taylor, in his turn, seems to me to be a species of "Little Englander": he has failed to grasp the significance and consequences of Soviet expansionism. Up till recently the shadow fell only across such exotic tribes as the Poles, the Czechs, the Slovaks, and the Hungarians. But now it is already getting closer to the Horn of Africa and the Persian Gulf. And when it reaches the Khyber Pass Professor Taylor may well become concerned—it may provoke him into some vivid historical memories. The present is too much with him. He cannot really understand 20th-century totalitarian dynamics. He has every right to remain within the 19th-century mental horizon.

LEOPOLD LABEDZ
University of Miami
Coral Gables, Florida

Kiosks

MAY I ANSWER Colin Welch's question in "Crossland Reconsidered" (ENCOUNTER, December)? The present telephone kiosks were not designed by Lutyens, but by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. He won the competition for the Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool at 23, rebuilt the House of Commons after the War, and was also responsible for the quite lamentable decorations of the City of London for the Queen's Coronation.

He is the grandson of Sir George Gilbert Scott, who designed St Pancras Station and the Albert Memorial—it's in the family.

I am confident there are designers in England, alive today, who could do a more up-to-date job.

MANFORD BELMORE
Erlangen
West Germany

Cranston's "Rousseau"

MAURICE CRANSTON is wrong when he states that Rousseau's own writings do not justify his reputation as "a prophet of democracy and equality" (ENCOUNTER, December).

Rousseau consistently advocated popular sovereignty; he maintained that ultimate authority should rest with the people. Confusion on this point only arises if attention is not paid to the distinction he made between *sovereignty*, the source of legitimate authority, and *government*, the executive empowered by the people to act on their behalf. When Rousseau says that democracy is fit only for gods he is talking of democracy as government, i.e. where everyone is involved in the actual administration of the state. When he says he prefers aristocratic government he means a system similar to that which exists in states which nowadays we call democratic, i.e. where a small number of people is empowered to administer the state. Hence he wrote:

> "The best of governments is aristocratic; the worst of sovereignties is aristocratic." (*Pléiade* Edition, III, p. 809)

This quotation comes from the *Letters from the Mountain*, a work which not only defended these principles forcefully but also, *pace* Professor Cranston, dealt at length and in detail with the politics of Geneva itself.

As for Rousseau's reputation as an advocate of equality, this is based less on the *Discourse on Inequality* than on *The Social Contract*. In that work he put forward equality, together with freedom, as the main object of any system of laws and argued for a degree of economic equality as well.

It is true that Rousseau's work presents difficulties and that he himself was pessimistic about the future. But the main direction of all his political writing is indisputably and unequivocally democratic. Why otherwise was *The Social Contract* greeted by his Genevan friends as "the arsenal of liberty", and immediately condemned and burnt by the authorities?

JOHN HOPE MASON
London

OF COURSE, everyone must read Rousseau in his own way. But the very distinction between "popular sovereignty" and "democratic government" which Mr John Hope Mason rightly stresses in Rousseau's argument is the distinction which enables Rousseau to plead, at the same time, for the authorisation of laws to come from the People as Assembled and for both the framing and the administration of those laws, together with the direction of policy, to be undertaken by élite figures such as Lawgivers, Princes and Magistrates. Such government is not democratic, and Rousseau never claimed that it was. It is the voluntary submission of all to the wisdom of the best.

Rousseau was bitterly opposed to existing inequalities: but that does not make him an egalitarian. Even in the *Social Contract* (if that is to be seen as his most "egalitarian" work) he plainly designs to introduce a new type of élite, closer to the model of Republican Antiquity. I would not disagree with Mr Hope Mason's suggestion that Rousseau was thought to be a radical revolutionary, in his lifetime and after. But that is because his philosophy was transformed by inferior minds into a crude ideology.

MAURICE CRANSTON
European University Institute
Florence, Italy

Bettelheim's "Holocaust"

THE CONCEPT of *denial*, as used by Dr Bruno Bettelheim in "The Holocaust" (December 1978) does not adequately explain why the Pope and the world's clergy, by and large, remained silent when they knew full well that the Jews of Europe were being murdered, or why Western nations were reluctant to take Jewish refugees. The main reason for their silence, and a reason which is both obvious and horrendous, was the widespread prejudice against Jews, a prejudice which has its roots in Christian teachings.

Thus, while the Holocaust has a general meaning for all humanity in terms of the destructive tendencies in man, it has a very specific meaning for the Jewish people and for Christianity.

JOSEPH V. KLEIN
Ottawa
Canada

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Toynbee's "Evensong"

WITH REFERENCE to J. S. Bixler's letter in ENCOUNTER (February 1979), concerning Philip Toynbee's argument against the ascription of "power" to God, I am sure that Mr Toynbee would be the first to acknowledge that this argument and its implications were worked out fully by his father, Arnold Toynbee, in the essay "What I Believe and What I Disbelieve" published in his *Experiences* (1969). So important and, to my mind, so discerning is this essay that I included the greater part of it in my recently published *Arnold Toynbee, a Selection from his Works* (Oxford University Press).

E. W. F. TOMLIN

Tall Trees
Morwenstow, Cornwall

Psychobabble

DAVID LODGE'S article on the poetry of psychobabble (October 1978), commenting on Cyra McFadden's study of the fads and the argot of Marin County, California, 1960s and 1970s, rejects the author's and others' view that the phrases somehow determine the tenor of that style. Can forms of speech ever mean so much?

It may be helpful "over there" to know that many of the phrases and figures of "psychobabble" were in current use forty, fifty, and more years ago in the New York area, another centre of speech styles "over here."

So "off the wall", "a . . . trip", "dropped out", "where I'm at", "where I'm coming from", "get behind", "get my act together", "hang in there", "heavy", and others, were used in New York in the 1920s and 1930s with very different intonations from those of Marin County today.

True, there was no novel (so far as I know) then compounded in the slang, which was simply speech. Yet it shows up here and there: John O'Hara (*Pal Joey*), Damon Runyon, E. E. Cummings, Dorothy Parker (*Big Blonde*).

I cannot question Mr Lodge's final comments, not having read *The Serial*. Yet I wonder whether the uses of speech to this effect are not largely coincidental.

EDWARD CARR, Jr.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

The National Health: "Charity"?

IN AFFIRMING that the National Health Service is "historically based not on egalitarian or collective dogma so much as on a sentiment of charity" Ferdinand Mount (ENCOUNTER, February) is perpetuating an unfortunately widespread misunderstanding. Since its inception the National Health Service has been financed, not by voluntary giving, but by taxation, and patients have received treatment, not as a gift, but "as of right."

Historically, the basis of the National Health Service is the Poor Law system of Workhouses and Infirmaries financed by local and general taxes (but vulgarly known as "charity"), and the 1911 National Insurance Act which provided General Practitioner services to low paid workers in return for compulsory financial contributions from employees and employers. Thus, the National Health Service, like the Poor Law system, far from being based on charity may properly be described as a system designed to remove the need for charity.

We have chosen not to give, but reluctantly to suffer taxation, and we have chosen not to receive gifts, but to have our rights. It is perhaps natural that we should try to cover our avarice and pride by a cloak of sanctimony, but let us not so far debase the language as to describe our arrangements as charitable. Perhaps our children might want to understand what the word really means.

(DR) MAX GAMMON

London

"The English Disease"

IT SEEMS TO ME that Ferdinant Mount (ENCOUNTER February) is much too sanguine in supposing that the British political process is still capable of producing policies adequate to our circumstances. Of course, Anthony Crosland was beginning to recognise by 1975 that the primrose path he had helped to lay out was ending in a patch of thorns. So had many others. The Institute of Economic Affairs, for example, has been criticising the underlying assumptions of British economic policy for 25 years and they have persuaded themselves that they have won a great victory on the battle field of economics. But the plain fact is that they have had no effect upon policy—Labour or Conservative. The auction element central to the British political process ensures that bad economics always drives out good.

The acceptance of the prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund and the attempt to implement them may be described as a policy. Yes, but the events since Mr Mount wrote his review-article strongly suggest that the Government cannot make even a borrowed policy stick. Furthermore there does not seem to be much evidence that the Conservatives can do better than Labour.

The *is* a disease of government which needs urgent attention.

H. S. FERNS

Hitler as "Actor"

LION FEUCHTWANGER'S novel *Erfolg* has as its main theme Adolf Hitler's first attempt (1923) to attain power. This attempt was undertaken on an initially smaller scale (the province of Bavaria with München as its centre). It miscarried because of inexperience, and it brought near-disaster to its initiator. It is not so well remembered because, in the following years, the Nazis tried to suppress every item concerning it (e.g. via their book-burnings, including as many novels of this author as they could lay their hands on).

The remarkable fact remains that, even in this early period of his "career", Adolf Hitler was well aware that he was badly in need of a competent man to teach him histrionic oratory. It was an art he brought to perfection during his second attempt, with disastrous results for so many innocent people. We all remember it, and it should never be forgotten.

Readers of James P. O'Donnell's article on Chaplin and Hitler etc (ENCOUNTER, June 1978) should note that in the Feuchtwanger novel (Berlin, *1930!*), the mechanic Rupert Kutzner (Adolf Hitler) is thoroughly instructed and supported in oratory by the "Hofschauspieler" Konrad Stolzing (Maurice Devenaut).

N. DAAMEN

Amergongen, Holland

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Watson's "Academe"

THE NOVEMBER ISSUE is distinguished by the magisterial reflections of Henry Kissinger and the elegant surveys of Messrs Bondy, Furbank, Janssen and Bradbury. The piece by George Watson ("Fictions of Academe") has a subject which is important. "A university, after all, is a place for students who have barely started to live, and professors who have done all (or nearly all) the living they are likely to do." But why should a university be less a setting for serious fictions than a French businessman's counting house or an English squire's estate? Does any other institution seem more central to the mental and emotional excitement of this age of information? To slight a genre which has produced works (unmentioned by Watson) as rich, subtle and beautifully-formed (as well as so different) as Michel Butor's *Degrés*, Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Richard Stern's *Other Men's Daughters* is to decree a desert in a garden. Watson is right to mark the changes in the genre; but to define it so narrowly makes readers gloss some of the good things he has to say.

JAMES LEWIS

Chicago, Ill.
USA

AUTHORS

Stanislaw Lem (b. 1921, in Poland) lives in Cracow. His books range from science fiction (reflecting his interest in cybernetics and space—he received the Nebula Award in 1973, and is co-founder of the Polish Astronomical Society) to novels and literary criticism. His most recent works include *The Chain of Chance* (1978), *The Star Diaries* (1976), and *The Futurological Congress* (1975). His piece in this issue of ENCOUNTER will appear in *A Perfect Vacuum: Perfect Reviews of Non-existent Books*, which his British publishers, Secker & Warburg (and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in the States), publish this spring in a translation by Michael Kandel.

Robert Skidelsky is Professor of International Studies at the University of Warwick, and his article is based on his inaugural lecture. He is the author of *The End of the Keynesian Era* (Macmillan Press, 1977), *Oswald Mosley* (1975), and *Politicians and the Slump* (1967).

Peter Redgrove's latest book of poems, *The Weddings at Nether Powers*, will be published this spring by Routledge.

Lord Gladwyn, who as Gladwyn Jebb was Britain's Permanent Representative at the United Nations from 1950–54, and British Ambassador to France from 1954–60, is Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords and their spokesman on Foreign Affairs and Defence. He is Vice-Chairman of the European Movement and Chairman of the Campaign for European Political Unity. His books include *The European Idea* (1966) and *Europe after de Gaulle* (1970).

Alun Chalfont was Defence Correspondent of *The Times* in London from 1961–64, and Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, from 1964, when he was created a life peer, until 1970. He is a Director of IBM UK Ltd, and Vice-President of the European Atlantic Committee. His *Montgomery of Alamein* was published by Weidenfeld in 1976, and he continued the ENCOUNTER series of "Authors & Critics" articles with his "Monty in Crossfire" (December, 1976).

Gordon Leff is Professor of History at the University of York. Among his books are *The Tyranny of Concepts* (1961), *History and Social Theory* (Merlin Press, 1969), *William of Ockham* (Manchester University Press, 1975), and *The Dissolution of the Medieval Outlook* (Harper & Row, 1976). He is completing a study of *The Concept of Man in the Middle Ages*.

Frances Yates is an Honorary Fellow of the Warburg Institute in London, where from 1956–67 she was Reader in the History of the Renaissance. Her many distinguished publications in this field include *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (1964), *The Art of Memory* (1966), *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (1972), *Astraea* (1975), and *Shakespeare's Last Plays* (1976), all published by Routledge. She was created a DBE in 1977.

Geoffrey Dimbleby is Professor of Human Environment at the Institute of Archaeology in London. He is co-author of *The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals* (Duckworth, 1969), and author of *Ecology and Archaeology* (Edward Arnold, 1977) and *Plants and Archaeology* (A. & C. Black, n.e. 1978).

Asa Briggs was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sussex from 1967–76, and is now Provost of Worcester College, Oxford. Among his many works, his *Victorian People* and *Victorian Cities* (University of Chicago Press, and Penguin Books respectively) have appeared in new editions, and Oxford University Press has recently published Volume IV of his monumental *History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*.

David Miles is Deputy Director of the Oxford Archaeological Unit. He is the author of *The Upper Thames Valley* (1974), and his *Introduction to Archaeology* was published last year by Ward Lock.

William Treharne Jones is a journalist with a strong interest in German affairs. From 1970–74 he was BBC Correspondent in Berlin. He is now an assistant producer with the BBC Television Current Affairs Group.

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